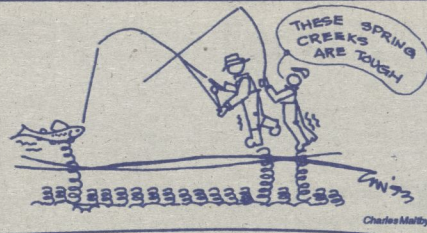




Trout Line



Summer 1994



Newsletter of the Montana Council of Trout Unlimited

Madison memories 60 years of changes on a great trout stream

By Bud Lilly
with Paul Schullery

My dad introduced me to the Madison in the summer of 1935, when I was 10 years old. We lived in Manhattan, where he was the local barber. One Sunday morning, we got up early, piled into our '34 Chevy, and went fishing. As on many later trips, we went through Logan, up past the old buffalo jump, on through to where we would hit the river. That first time, we drove quite a ways up into the canyon. I don't remember much about the fishing on that trip, but I do remember that the rattlesnakes were as thick as flies.

Before World War II we could drive way up into the Bear Trap. In about an hour's drive, we got to a place called the Shadoan Cabin, which was quite a few miles up, and a lot farther than you can go now. It was spectacular and exciting fishing, what with the huge rocks, big deep pools, and dangerous wading.

In fact prior to WWII, the lower Madison was the only part of the river I was even aware of. I kind of thought the Madison was from Three Forks up to the Bear Trap. But it was all the fishing anybody needed.

Our most memorable trips to the Madison before the War were during the salmonfly emergence. Whether in the

Bear Trap or farther downstream, there were great salmonfly hatches. One of my favorite memories, one that I think is representative of the fishing experience back then, is of a trip we made in about 1939, when I was 14. As the local barber, my father knew everybody in the area, and had permission to fish from some of the biggest property holders, like the McDonald and Darlington ranches. Some friends of ours were camped over there, and we went over one evening to have supper with them, and to share the fishing. It would be the worst kind of behavior today, but in those days you kept every big trout you got, and put them on a string to show them off.

These fish were caught on the actual live salmon flies. As much as I may have preferred fly fishing when it was practical, we weren't troubled by too many refinements in tackle then, and with so much live bait just hanging off the bushes, it was easy to get into great fishing. The river was usually off color at least a little bit, so live bait seemed the obvious choice anyway.

But I suppose my best memories of those big fish on the lower Madison were from the first few years after the War. One of the first places I fished that first season after the War was the Madison. In June 1946, just after I got home, I went fishing over near the Greycliffs. Imagine



Bud Lilly, right, with Stanley Falkow, a fellow Montana TU Advisory Board member.

yourself there back then, with hardly any other fishermen for miles. The salmon flies were dripping off the bushes, and you'd just grab them as you needed them. You'd put two on the hook, with a big sinker a little ways up the line, then throw it out there and let it bounce along until something big grabbed it.

We caught a lot of big fish, up to a few

pounds each, but the thing that stands out in my mind now, almost 50 years later, is the one fish I never even got a look at. I was fishing along when something grabbed my bait and without any hesitation just swam to the other side of the river and parked itself near the far bank. I couldn't move it, even though I was using really heavy line,

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35th Annual TU National Convention in Bozeman September 21-25

The Madison-Gallatin Chapter of Trout Unlimited hopes to capitalize on Montana's blue-ribbon fishing reputation and its popularity since the release of *A River Runs Through It* by playing host in Bozeman, Mont., to one of the largest four-day national TU conventions to date.

Mark your calendar for September 21 to 25, 1994.

"We are taking a new approach to this year's national convention by transforming it from the traditional business meeting to a festive celebration for wild trout and salmon," said Tom Anacker, co-chairman of the host committee. "We hope our area's rich trout resource and the increased interest in fly fishing will be a major draw to this year's event."

Of course business meetings

will be held, but TU also will offer educational seminars on fly fishing, panel discussions about the future of fishing in the West and a number of festivities that will make the event enjoyable to attend.

Tentatively scheduled events for this year's convention include a Western BBQ at the Flying D Ranch on the Gallatin River, fly fishing demonstrations and clinics, a roast of fly-fishing legend Bud Lilly, National Conservation Banquet and Auction, the traditional U.S. Forest Service luncheon, resource issue presentations, the National Resource Board meeting, area bus tours of Yellowstone National Park and open days for all the September fly fishing one can handle.

The committee suggests making hotel reservations well in

The Wild Trout V convention also is set for Mammoth September 26-27. See story, page 8.

advance because of the limited room available in Bozeman. Members should call the Holiday Inn, GranTree Inn or Comfort Inn in Bozeman as soon as possible for room reservations. Specific activities are being finalized, but members, volunteers and board members are encouraged to call the National TU office at 1-800-805-4607 to register for the convention. Registration forms also will appear in the Summer 1994 issue of Trout magazine.

Cost for early registration is \$30 through August 31, 1994, and \$40 afterwards. Activities will be coordinated on a no-host basis for the entire event. Benefit

banquet tickets may be purchased through the national office. Upon receipt of the member registration information, a packet will be sent out by the local committee to the attendee.

Donations and sponsorship support for the event will be graciously accepted by the local committee for events, seminars and auctions.

Our goal will be to raise more than \$50,000 and provide a setting for people to enjoy the Big Sky State of Montana," Anacker said. "We would be very interested in including a donation of product or service from local TU chapters in the

benefit auction."

Please contact Dan Walker at (406) 542-5470 regarding donations and sponsorships.

The September hatch on the Madison and Yellowstone rivers includes grasshoppers and caddis, so register early and plant yourself at the vice in preparation for the 35th Annual National Convention.

Inside scoop



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Ad deadline for the Fall 1994 issue is August 30.

Trout Line

Trout Line is a publication of the Montana Council of Trout Unlimited, published for the enjoyment and education of everyone concerned about Montana's coldwater resources.

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author.

Articles, chapter updates, letters and artwork related to the purposes and interests of the Montana Council and Trout Unlimited are welcome. The editor reserves the right to reject or edit material submitted. Deadlines are published in each previous issue.

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Farling covering the state—and the issues

By Bruce Farling
Montana TU Executive Director

The most enjoyable part of my first two months as executive director for the state council has been visiting with our membership at chapter programs, board meetings and other gatherings. By mid-April I had visited with the West Slope, Big Blackfoot, Pat Barnes-Missouri River, George Grant, Bitter Root, Northwest, and Lewis and Clark Chapters, as well as with Libby's Kootenai Flyfishers.

The ideas I've heard have been valuable. The diversity of opinion has been notable, to say nothing of the fishing lies. If I haven't met with your chapter, it's either because I haven't heard back from you, or because I've had a scheduling conflict. We'll get together yet.

We now have a Montana TU

cave, er, office. It's small, but it's cheap. We're renting space from the National Wildlife Federation in downtown Missoula. The arrangement allows us to save money through shared services (ie., access to a copier, conference room and library resources).

I've also been working on internal planning and budgeting items, setting up the office and promoting TU. I've been tackling conservation issues important to the state council and specific chapters. We've now weighed in with Fish, Wildlife and Parks opposing a recent proposal to reduce license fees, as well as having planted ourselves into the state's planning process for recovering bull trout. Along with Stan Bradshaw, I've been molding and selling proposals for in-stream flow protection for the

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upper Clark Fork, ideas that we hope will open doors for us in other drainages. Moreover, I'm helping Trout Unlimited come up with a unified approach on some sticky river-crowding issues, as well as reviewing and commenting on proposed rules that will profoundly affect water quality protection throughout Montana. That's the short list.

I've also been representing TU in meetings with the Legislature, state and federal agencies and Montana's congressional delegation. By mid-May I also

had provided presentations on a number of resource topics at several professional conferences or workshops. Moreover, I've been working to increase the visibility of our concerns with national Trout Unlimited. Look for an article on bull trout in an upcoming issue of Trout magazine.

I hope this work is helping on the ground. In future Trout Lines, I'll fill you in on hot issues and what you can do to help the council or specific chapters. See you on the river.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Ric Smith:

The *Trout Line* article regarding the selection of Bruce Farling as your executive director made my day.

Your organization could do no better than Bruce. I have worked with Bruce as both a Forest Service fisheries biologist and district ranger for many years, as well as a member and chairman of the Rock Creek Advisory Council. I can always expect Bruce to ask the right questions at the right time to effect positive change in behalf of natural resources. His presence has improved management of many resources we have dealt with together, notably grazing and mining.

In working with him, I have never seen him take an anti-development stance unless it could not be done responsibly. He has insisted natural resource protection have equal weight with commodity production. He is most effective because he makes the effort to become very familiar with the issues and realistic alternatives before becoming involved.

In short, when Bruce speaks, we had better all listen. He is a true friend of our trout.

Sincerely,
Greg L. Munther, District Ranger,
Ninemile Ranger District,
Lolo National Forest

Dear Ric Smith:

I want to commend you on your selection of Bruce Farling as executive director of TU. I've

had the opportunity to work with Bruce on several river-related matters. His ability to focus on issues and work with a variety of interest groups was demonstrated during his tenure with the Clark Fork-Pend Oreille Coalition. This ability also resulted in his selection to the Upper Clark Fork Steering Committee, which is wrestling with the water allocation issue at the headwaters of an important river, combined with a superfund site.

Most recently, I've worked with Bruce on the Blackfoot Challenge Steering Committee. This group attempts to coordinate resource-related information regarding the Blackfoot drainage, and acts as a clearinghouse for anyone needing assistance with resource issues. I certainly hope Bruce will find time to continue with this endeavor, since he brings some excellent insight into the challenges facing this river.

A matter rising to the surface for discussion is the complex issue of river-use allocation. I know TU will be an important player in reaching a workable solution to this topic, and Bruce will bring valuable tools to the table to address this difficult task.

I certainly look forward to working with Bruce on Region 2 issues and concerns, and please have him contact me if I can be of assistance.

Sincerely,
Rich Clough, Regional Supervisor
Montana Department of Fish,
Wildlife and Parks, Missoula

Hatcheries Still Matter!

To the Editor:

Montana anglers have much to be proud of. As the birthplace of wild trout management, Montana has affected trout management across the nation. Unfortunately, like many revolutions it has created some backlash. Hatchery "bashing" has taken its place at the anglers forum right along with neoprene, catch-and-release, and "the big one got away." But before the angling public throws the baby out with the bath water, let's get something straight: hatchery products have evolved well beyond put-and-take.

A great example of undue hatchery bashing was printed in a recent Bozeman Daily Chronicle article. There, Jasper Carlton of the Legal Biodiversity Fund, (a co-petitioner for endangered status of fluvial Arctic grayling) derided the ongoing program to restore Arctic grayling to the Big Hole River and its native range. Carlton stated, "You can't recover a species simply by dumping hatchery-raised fish into another ecosystem."

Actually, it happened, right in Carlton's backyard! Colorado's greenback cutthroat was plucked from the brink of extinction by none other than a hatchery in Bozeman, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Fish Technology Center. Scientists there used state-of-the-art techniques to build a brood stock from about 60 wild greenbacks,

which eventually supplied fish for successful reintroductions. (See *Trout*, Winter 1993 and Autumn 1988 issues for the rest of the story.)

These same experts, along with the internationally renowned Trout and Salmon Genetics Lab at the University of Montana, have been involved in the Big Hole River Arctic Grayling Recovery Project since its inception. They have designed a brood reserve program that will maximize the genetic diversity of the wild stock of Big Hole grayling raised in Bozeman. Progeny of the brood will be used to re-introduce grayling into their native range, as well as to supplement the Big Hole stock to get them back to stable numbers where the population can fend for itself.

Hatcheries and hatchery experts are one important component of the recovery program for river dwelling grayling in Montana. Their role here in Montana, and across the country, is changing just as fisheries management is changing. To think that the Endangered Species Act or any legal maneuvering will spare the grayling from extinction is folly. Only a cooperative effort involving state-of-the-art fisheries science with agencies, anglers and agriculture working together will spare Montana's grayling the fate of the buffalo.

Sincerely,
Pat Byorth, Fisheries Biologist,
Montana Department of Fish,
Wildlife and Parks, Dillon

Chapter notes

Pat Barnes-Mo River Chapter - Helena

The Pat Barnes-Missouri River Chapter board members put on the annual fund-raising banquet in May in Helena.

During the winter, the chapter had great programs that included Neale Streeks on New Zealand; Wayne Hadley, FWP, on the Upper Clark's Fork; Dave Corcoran on Belize bone fishing; and Don Peters, FWP, on the Big Blackfoot River. At press time, we had programs on fishing in Russia and Alaska planned.

The board has worked with Roxann Lincoln, Water Quality Bureau, State Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, on a stream water pollution prevention plan on a mine not currently in operation.

The chapter's annual river cleanup on the Missouri took place this spring, as did the chapter's third Bob Jacklin Casting Clinic at Spring Meadow Lake Park in Helena.

-Earl Dorsey, president

West Slope Chapter - Missoula

In April, the West Slope Chapter co-sponsored a meeting with the Clark Fork-Pend Oreille Coalition on the natural resources damage claim the state has with ARCO. The meeting was well attended and informative. TU Executive Director Bruce Farling urged the state people to use any dollars obtained for restoring damage to the Clark Fork fishery after more than a century of mining.

The chapter will meet again in the fall, following its May fundraiser banquet in Missoula and after manning a booth at the second annual Fly Fishing Fair, also in May.

-Steve Schombel, president

Northwest Chapter - Kalispell

The chapter planned to begin a project on Herrig Creek in mid-May. This is an inlet stream to Little Bitterroot Lake. The project will include volunteer help from chapter members, Plum Creek Lumber Co., the Forest Service and Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

The project will involve stream rehab, fencing a large radius along the creek, along with sediment removal and vegetation replanting along stream banks. The intent is to help a population of rainbow trout trying to use this for a spawning area.

-Arvin Amundson, president

Bitter Root Chapter - Hamilton

Bitter Root TU plans a riparian fencing project this summer on a section of Mill Creek, which empties into the Bitterroot River north of Hamilton. The chapter awaits an environmental assessment on the project, since it received funds from FWP to assist the project.

The chapter has been monitoring a problem caused this spring when earthen dams on a private game farm failed, sending sediment into the Bitterroot River and a tributary. We also have been sending a representative to a committee reviewing a county plan.

The chapter heard a talk on rod construction from Tom Morgan of R.L. Winston Rod Co. of Twin Bridges, and held its second women's fly casting clinic with Jennifer Smith of Bozeman.

Members participated with other local groups in playing host to a free kids fishing clinic in early June.

-Ron Messer, president



Marshall Bloom

Montana TU Advisory Board member Irv Weissman, left, Wise River's Complete Flyfisher guide Stuart Decker and former USFS Northern Region Forester John Mumma, right, enjoy an intense discussion of aquatic ecosystems prior to the MTU Council meeting May 28. Mumma received the 1994 Montana TU Chairman's Award for Distinguished Service on behalf of Montana's coldwater fisheries.

Bitter Root TU battles jetskis

By Marshall Bloom

Picture this scene: You've hiked a mile downstream, tied on a #18 PMD and just seen the first large rainbow dimple in the slack water below the sharp bend in the river. You chuckle to yourself as you watch the sun playing on the Bitterroots, when you hear what can only be a big semi having engine trouble on US 93 a good one-half mile away. Abruptly, the noise gets much louder, and around the bend roars a miniature Millennium Falcon piloted by Darth Vader in a swimsuit. In horror, you leap out of the way as a roostertail of water collapses a section of bank into the water and as a kid floating downstream in an innertube capsizes in the backwash.

The jetski zooms around the next bend so quickly that only by the smell of the exhaust, the swelling wakes and the rever-

berating noise can you be sure that something happened. And as for the rising fish, forget it! Downheartedly, you clip off the fly, reel in and head back to the car.

A trout fishermen's nightmare? Indeed not. This scene was observed last year and is likely to become more frequent on rivers like the Bitterroot, Clark Fork and Blackfoot.

Bitter Root TU (BRTU), led by former Chapter President Jack Mauer, is trying to get a handle on the situation before it gets out of hand. They have written to the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MDFWP) and presented testimony to the Fish and Game Commission requesting limits on the use of jet skis and jet boats in Western Montana. BRTU's letter acknowledged that jet skis may have a valid recreational use on lakes and very large rivers, but their use on rivers like the Bitterroot resembles "having a skeet range in the middle of a golf course."

The letter pointed out the "serious public safety hazard" on small rivers where numerous folks float downstream in canoes, innertubes and rafts. Not to mention that one jetski can ruin the recreational experience of everyone else on the stream!

Restrictions on jetskis are being actively opposed by several hundred (so far) people who have petitioned MDFWP officials in Missoula. When a similar issue developed several years ago on the Yellowstone, jetboat proponents greatly outnumbered anglers at a hearing in Livingston. The jetski proponents will doubtless be supported by merchants who see an expanding market for these multi-thousand dollar machines.

In the absence of demonstrated damage or public safety problems, there currently is no way to limit such watercraft for what are called "social issues." However, largely at the urging of TU, MDFWP is setting up a working group of diverse interests to examine this issue, and TU will be one of the participants.

BRTU is enlisting support from other TU chapters and sportsman groups and trying to get an article in Flyfisherman magazine. New legislation may be needed to address "social issues" like this on our streams. Hearings may be set later this year. If you see a meeting notice or get asked to write a letter, be sure to get involved. The fishing that gets wrecked might be yours!

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Parks requiring fishing permits

National Park Service

Yellowstone National Park announced in March that anglers 16 years old and older who plan to fish in the park will now be required to purchase a special use permit.

The new permitting system went into effect with the opening of the 1994 fishing season. The change stems from recent legislation that authorizes the National Park Service to charge for certain park activities, with revenues remaining in the park. With continued declining budgets, programs such as the park's fisheries management program have been at risk.

The new system includes a \$5 seven-day permit and a \$10 season permit for all anglers ages 16 and older. Anglers ages 12 to 15 will be allowed to fish in the park free, but will be required to obtain a non-fee permit. Those age 11 and younger may fish without a permit.

The fees are considerably less than what is charged by most states both for resident and non-resident fishing licenses. No state license is required to fish in Yellowstone.

The special use permits will be available at National Park Service ranger stations and visitor centers throughout the park. Some sporting goods stores in surrounding communities will offer the permits for sale. Visitors wishing to obtain a permit by mail can write and request information from the Visitor Services Office, National Park Service, P.O. Box 168, Yellowstone National Park, Wyo. 82190.

During the 1993 fishing season, 157,500 non-fee permits were issued to potential park anglers. (It is not known how many of these permits were actually used.) It is estimated that under the new program, about 80,000 permits will be sold, which could generate revenue of about \$425,000, all of which will remain in the park to support the management of the park's fisheries program.

The park's fisheries program includes research, education and enforcement programs that meet the park's objectives to manage aquatic systems as an integral part of the park ecosystem, preserve and restore native species and aquatic habitats, and provide recreational fishing opportunities for enjoyment of park visitors.

Madison memories

continued from page 1

probably 10- or 12-pound test. Whatever it was, it just stayed there until finally I pulled so hard I broke the line. There's no knowing how big a trout it was, of course, though obviously it was a whole lot bigger than the three- or four-pounders we were able to land pretty quickly. It wasn't uncommon in that period, particularly up in the Bear Trap area, for a good fisherman to catch a trout of eight to 12 pounds.

Nostalgia is a complicated thing, especially for those of us who've since abandoned some of our old ways. Many of us have gotten pretty touchy about bait fishing on today's trout streams, but those were different times, with different rules. I'd love to see that quality of fishing come back so we could try it with all the wonderful new fly-fishing gear and fly patterns we prefer now. We fished with the live salmon flies early in the season, and we often used sculpin, which were deadly, particularly up in the Bear Trap. We did do some fly fishing, but in those days, you just adjusted your methods to suit the circumstances, and had no twinges of conscience whatever method you used.

The times were much simpler, and the only goal was to catch a big one, and then another. If fly fishing didn't seem practical, we'd sometimes start with a big gob of worms, fishing with it just long enough to catch a nice big sucker. Then we'd filet the sucker and cut out sections about an inch square. We'd leave the skin on those pieces, because it was strong and would hold the hook. We'd weight

the line with a big sinker, throw it out there into a big hole and just wait. If you didn't hang up on the bottom sometimes, you weren't doing it right. Often, we'd use a fly rod, because if the bait is moving along in the current, your control is better with a fly line.

But fly fishing gave us plenty of great moments too, as flies were developed to match the local insects, especially the salmonflies.

As a boy, when I wasn't fishing I was playing baseball on the local team. Once, around the Fourth of July in 1946, we had a game in Ennis. A guy on the other team was Jack Scully, who would become one of the longtime local fishermen and businessmen. He suggested that when the game ended, we should go down to the channels, just outside of town, and do a little fishing. So about 4 o'clock we went down, and sure enough, the salmonflies were out. Jack had a new fly, one I'd never seen before, called the Bloody Butcher. I didn't really even understand about dry flies at the time, and I'm not sure Jack did, but we bought six of these and learned fast. Salmonflies hung like bunches of grapes from the willows along the stream, so we cast as far under those branches as we could and then held on. We didn't worry much about keeping the fly afloat, and it certainly didn't matter to the trout. That was what we thought of as a salmonfly imitation until we saw the Bunyan Bug.

Norman Means, a Missoula fly tier, had developed the series of flies he called Bunyan Bugs in about 1927. They were wood-bodied flies with horsehair wings; the bodies were painted various colors, including those of the salmonfly. They recently became famous all over again in Norman Maclean's book *A River Runs Through It*, when Maclean describes his first look at one. "I took one look at it and it felt perfect." Well, so did the trout. I don't remember fishing with them until about 1943, when a teacher friend from Ennis and I stopped at the local tackle shop there and bought some. They floated beautifully, and the fish couldn't get enough of them. I know they've been tied



String of trout caught by Jim Safford of Three Forks from the Madison in the 1920s. Note fly rods in back of car. Photo courtesy of Pat Barnes.

and sold again recently, and it would be fun to give them another try, to see if they still make the fish feel perfect.

Even in the 1940s the Madison hadn't really been discovered by the visiting fishermen. Most of the fishermen were local. Another sign of the times was the way we looked at some of our fellow fishermen. There were guys my dad referred to as "BB's," which was short for "those Butte bastards." Apparently, he didn't like to see people leaving their neighborhood river and coming over and crowding "his" streams. The BB's, who of course had just as much right on the river as we did, loved the Jefferson up around Whitehall and through the canyon, but sometimes they'd leak down onto the Madison and would just make my dad furious.

It might interest today's fishermen, who deal with much more crowded conditions, to know that half a century ago we didn't always welcome other fishermen either. In *A Trout's Best Friend*, I explained that about this same time, we were so spoiled that we considered the river crowded if we even saw another fisherman near us. My dad used to complain that he wouldn't fish the Gallatin on the Fourth of July weekend because he "didn't want to break off the tip of his rod in somebody's ass." My dad had a pretty strong sense of territoriality. I can't imagine what he would think of the Madison today.

On returning to Montana, I got a pre-med degree at Montana State University in Bozeman, which took some time and effort. Somehow I found time to fish as well -- usually the Gallatin or the Madison from the Bear Trap into the valley. The fishing during that period on both rivers was very good for me. My fly fishing was the wet fly methods that I learned from my dad, and it didn't really take much skill to catch fish.

However, over the years the

fishing deteriorated very noticeably on the "lower" Madison, as we referred to it. The salmonflies disappeared on all of the river below the Bear Trap Canyon, and the water temperature continued to rise. The warm water during the summer months of June through early September has created almost a zero fishery as compared to what I remember.

The dam creating Ennis Lake appears to be a major factor in altering the river ecology over the years. The only periods in which the river is a viable fishery are early spring, fall and winter. I hope that by lowering the water temperature a few degrees during the summer months, the fishing can be restored.

Year-round fishing on the lower Madison would provide many more miles of quality fishing for the entire river, from Hebgen Dam to the headwaters of the Missouri. The additional available river would spread the fishing pressure and provide a more quality experience.

The full recreational potential of the Madison would have a very positive effect on the local economy as well. Three Forks, in particular, has an emerging tourism business. Quality trout fishing is the number one attraction for tourism in the entire area.

Montana is now a focal point for people looking to relocate a business, buy a home, or acquire recreational property. This transitional period means adjustment to change. With increasing demands for energy, perhaps there are ways to restore the fishing by lowering water temperatures and meeting the demands for more power generation, too.

The future of Montana's wonderful trout streams is still within our control. Better management, with stream cleanup and restoration where needed, is now recognized as necessary more than ever. I trust that planning for the Lower Madison's future will give full measure to trout and trout fishing.



Photo courtesy MSU Museum of the Rockies Archives

Below Madison dam at Powerhouse. Trout was about 30". Caught with fly rod in Bear Trap Canyon ca. 1918.

Perfect your basic casts *Casting clinic from the R. L. Winston Rod Co. 1994 catalog*

Winston Rod Co. has generously given Trout Line permission to reprint its basic flycasting instructions from its 1994 R.L. Winston catalog.

By Mel Krieger and Tom Morgan

• Introduction •

Almost all of us can improve our fly casting. A proficient caster will catch more fish, attain greater satisfaction from his equipment, and most importantly, have more fun.

This clinic is an analysis of the basic casting stroke that is the essence of all fly casting. It also identifies and helps correct the most common casting faults encountered by experienced as well as beginning casters. When trying to improve your technique, you will be confronted by two immediate problems. The first is to identify your mistakes; the second is to determine how to correct them.

The primary objective in fly casting is to present the fly a desired distance by casting a weighted line. This is best done by properly applying the power to the rod to form a correct loop in the line. This loop forces the line to roll out and present the fly.

There are three correct loops illustrated by Figure A.

When power is applied to the rod tip over a wider arc, the loops become wider; narrower loops are created by stopping the rod in a higher position and by using a narrower casting arc. Where you stop the rod tip on your forward and back casts determines the size of the loop. The size of a loop is generally the difference between the highest point of the rod travel and the point where the tip stops.

It is important to be able to control and to change the loop size to cover all fishing conditions. Wide loops give you the low line speed needed for delicate fishing. The medium loop covers most fishing conditions, providing a moderate line speed. Narrow loops have the least air resistance and the highest line speed. They are superb for long-distance casting, penetrating wind, and presenting the fly accurately.

• Basic Casting Stroke •

Let us analyze a casting stroke that will correctly position your rod to form these

loops. The first step is to grip the rod properly. We recommend putting your thumb on top or slightly to the side. These grips are comfortable and offer excellent strength and control.

The traditional clock face is used to show the point where the rod stops. We have separated the clock face to more accurately depict the fly casting stroke.

• Back Cast • (Figure B)

1. Start with the rod at 11 o'clock, the forearm about 45 degrees and the wrist depressed.

2. Pull the hand up and back to position 2.

3. Tilt the rod back stopping about 1 o'clock, position 3. Don't permit the wrist to open past 45 degrees.

Wait until the line has almost straightened behind you. (Drifting the rod back slightly after the loop is formed will improve the timing and smoothness of the forward cast.)

• Forward Cast • (Figure C)

1. The rod is at 1 o'clock, the forearm is vertical, the wrist is open to a maximum of 45 degrees, and the line has straightened.

2. Push the hand forward and slightly down as in position 2.

3. Tilt the rod forward stopping at about 11 o'clock to form your loop, position 3. The wrist is depressed with the rod butt almost touching the forearm. (As in the back cast, when false casting, you may drift the rod forward.)

From position 1 through 3, in both the back and forward casts, the application of power must be progressive, continuous, and as smooth as possible. An average cast is from 11 to 1 o'clock. Use a narrower stroke for very short casts and a wider stroke for long casts.

• Loops •

Figure D shows a correct loop, a non-loop, and a tailing loop. The two principal problems in fly casting result in non-loops and tailing or closed loops.

Correct Loop - A correct loop, shaped like a tipped over "V" or "U," offers excellent control of the fly line and fly. These correct loops are the result of a smooth, even, continuous application of power and a straight line path of the rod tip.

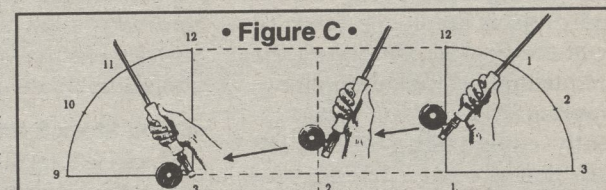
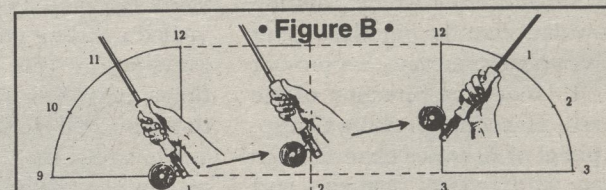
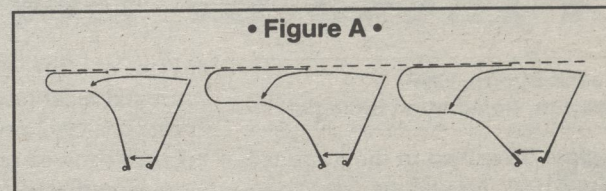
Non-Loop - You are moving the rod through too wide an arc. You are dropping the rod tip too low on both the back and forward casts. You are not loading (bending) the rod sufficiently. You are opening your wrist past 45 degrees. The tip of the rod is traveling in a convex path. **CORRECTION:** Narrow the casting arc. Stop the rod higher. Move your hand in a straighter line. Maintain a controlled wrist, opening it less than 45 degrees. Review Figures B and C, stopping your rod as shown.

Tailing Loops - You are applying too much power too soon in the forward stroke - the most common error in casting. The

casting stroke is jerky. The casting stroke is too short. The rod tip is traveling in a concave path. **CORRECTION:** Apply the power progressively. Apply the power smoothly and continuously. Lengthen your casting stroke. This is particularly true when you are trying to make a distance cast. You need to apply the power over a longer period of time. This application of power is the most difficult aspect of casting.

The back cast and forward cast should be in a straight line with no side-to-side wobble. With a controlled wrist, the line should travel in the same direction and parallel to the movement of the casting

continued on page 7



Fly Tier's Corner Try the Jolly Green Giant

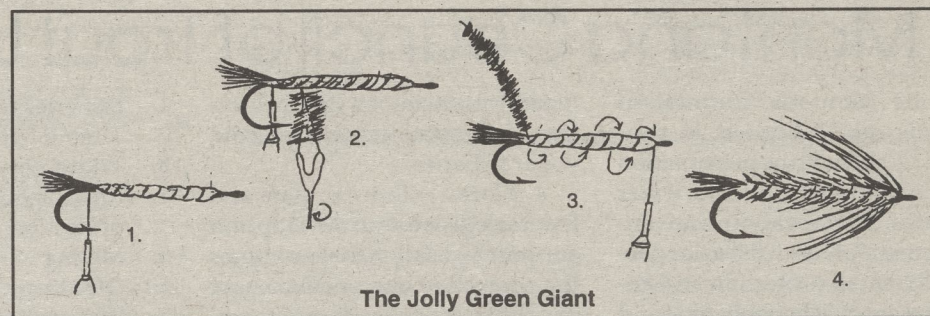
From the Desk of
The Yellowstone Fly Tier

Ron Mason of Alberton, Mont., sent the Yellowstone Fly Tier "The Jolly Green Giant," which is a dragonfly nymph imitation. Ron says that the pattern was originally developed in 1972 by Everett Caryl of Spokane, Wash. However, Ron has modified the pattern to take advantage of some of the new materials available today.

Ron goes on to say that all but the highest alpine lakes in Montana contain dragonflies, many have them in abundance. Between June and August, depending on the elevation and weather, the nymphs will migrate towards the shore. They must climb out of the water to shed their nymphal cases and complete the transition to adult. It is during this shoreward migration that they are most vulnerable. No self-respecting trout can turn down a meal like this.

The trout will generally cruise the drop-off edges, waiting to ambush this large and nutritious food source, as nymphs migrate toward the shore.

Ron's preferred fishing technique employs the use of a floating line, a long leader and a weighted JG Giant.



The Jolly Green Giant

He then casts over the drop-off edges and uses a very slow hand-twist retrieve. On occasion a short quick strip of 4 to 8 inches may be added.

In closing, Ron says, "The thrill of watching trout zoom in to hit this pattern in a gin clear lake is an experience that is not quickly forgotten. The Jolly Green Giant is one of the most effective patterns that I have used in lakes that have viable dragonfly populations."

• JOLLY GREEN GIANT •

Hook: Mustad 9674

Sizes: 4-10

Thread: 6/0 Olive

Tails: Fibers from the lower back feather of a ringneck pheasant. These fibers are a bluish color and should be tied in short, no longer than 1/4 the length of the hook shank.

Body: Spun in a dubbing loop for a nice full and shaggy look.

The dubbing blend is made from olive angora goat hair and olive antron yarn, mixed 50/50. Tease the yarn out, cut 3/8" strips and blend with the angora goat.

NOTE: When wrapping the dubbing loop forward, comb back the fibers with each wrap. This will give the imitation a full and shaggy appearance.

Collar: Natural ringneck pheasant rump feather, 2 or 3 turns.

Head: Olive thread

I have also tied this pattern using an olive crystal flash rib and with a gold bead.

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Pieces of the Puzzle

Biologist's Update of the Big Hole River Grayling Restoration Project

By Pat Byorth, FWP
Grayling Restoration Biologist

As described in the Summer 1993 Trout Line, efforts to restore the Arctic grayling population of the Big Hole River have accelerated since September 1991. Under the direction of the Arctic Grayling Working Group, a panel of fisheries experts from state and federal agencies and private organizations, research and projects are being done. To meet the goal of conserving the unique fluvial (stream-dwelling) grayling, the working group recently completed a restoration plan that is being circulated for public comment. The plan spells out a strategy: to define factors limiting the abundance of grayling in the Big Hole River, to develop a brood stock, and to begin re-introducing grayling throughout their historic range. As "pieces of the puzzle" fall into place, fisheries managers and researchers will be better able to ensure a future for Montana's unique fluvial Arctic grayling. The pieces are accumulating, as the following brief summaries of ongoing projects will attest.

• Population Monitoring •

While grayling numbers declined through the early 1980's, the population has recently stabilized at around 30 per mile. Each year crews with the Department

of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, have surveyed sections of the Big Hole River. The 1992 and 1993 spawning runs showed promise, as they were dominated by fish over 3 years old. Fall 1993 surveys revealed a strong crop of yearling grayling, in spite of severe low flows in 1992. However, high flows in 1993 during incubation and hatching limited recruitment of newly hatched fish into the population. Consequently, until conditions allow several consistent reproductive years, the population is not likely to increase.

• Brood Stock & Reintroduction •

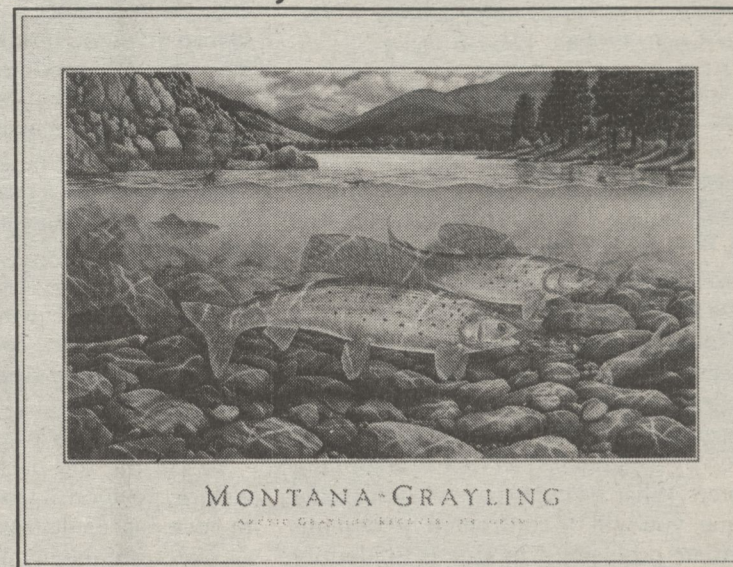
Since 1988, fertilized eggs have been gathered from Big Hole grayling and raised at the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Fish Technology Center in Bozeman. A portion of each year's fish are retained for brood stock, while excess grayling have been used for additional reserves or reintroductions. A reserve stock also has been maintained in a lake near Ennis.

Reintroductions have been initiated to test the survivability of planted grayling, as well as to expand the range as insurance against extinction. In July 1992, 5,000 yearling grayling were planted in the Gallatin River near Yellowstone National Park. They distributed themselves throughout the river and appeared to survive the winter in good condition.

Additional experimental reintroductions of 28,000 yearling grayling into the Gallatin and the East Gallatin Rivers, and Cougar Creek in Yellowstone National Park took place in 1993 and in 1994. Biologists will monitor these grayling to improve strategies for reintroductions and for future enhancement of the Big Hole River population.

• Effects of Angling •

To investigate the potential influences of angling on Big Hole grayling, research is being conducted in three phases. The first phase is a creel census relying on voluntary angler responses, coupled with angler counts. This information is used to determine the distribution of fishing pressure and catch rates along the Big Hole River. The second phase is a hooking mortality study, where grayling are caught on hook-and-line and held for a short time to determine the effectiveness of catch-and-release regulations. The final phase is a review of electrofishing survey data regarding the occurrence of hooking scars in the grayling population. The three aspects of the study will shed light on the ability of the grayling to withstand fishing pressure. Results suggest that the grayling population is not heavily exploited and catch-and-release regulations adequately protect the population.



MONTANA GRAYLING

• Thermal Effects •

The Big Hole River warms each summer to levels that may be harmful to grayling and other salmonids. A study of the effects of warm temperatures on grayling was completed last summer at five stations along the river, and biologists have documented the conditions that the grayling endure. A laboratory study was conducted in May to determine what these thermal conditions might mean to grayling survival. The results indicate that in dry years, like 1992, water temperatures reach critical levels for short periods that may cause stress and even mortality.

• Movements •

Since 1986 FWP biologists have

tagged grayling during spring and fall to monitor their movements. As part of the Recovery Project, 31 grayling also were fitted with radiotags during fall and winter 1992 and 1993. The information gathered so far indicates that the grayling congregated near Wisdom for spawning, redistribute throughout the basin over summer and fall, and seek out key habitats like springs and deep pools for the winter. Thus, grayling are capable of making long movements, which means their critical habitats may be spread out over the entire upper Big Hole Basin. Once critical seasonal habitats are identified, we may be able to protect, restore and rehabilitate these areas.

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Montana Council of Trout Unlimited: Statement of Policy

The Montana Council of Trout Unlimited is concerned with the preservation and enhancement of cold water fisheries. Preservation and enhancement of these fisheries necessarily entail protection and enhancement of fisheries habitat and watersheds. The health of the fisheries habitat and watersheds can be directly or indirectly damaged by a number of human activities.

Therefore, it is the policy of the Montana Council of Trout Unlimited to pursue protection for cold water fisheries, their habitat, and watersheds whenever they are threatened. To this end, the Montana council of Trout Unlimited:

1. Encourages local chapter involvement in the protection and rehabilitation of fisheries, streams, and watersheds within their regions;
2. Assists local chapters in developing and presenting positions on issues of concern within their regions;
3. Works with local, state and

federal agencies for the protection and enhancement of cold water fisheries;

4. Works with local, state and federal legislators to develop and support legislation that promotes the protection and enhancement of cold water fisheries and to oppose legislation that reduces the protection of cold water fisheries;

5. Initiates and participates in litigation before state and federal courts in cases that involve cold water fisheries, consistent with the guidelines and procedures imposed by the national Trout Unlimited and local chapters;

6. Actively defends the right of public participation in the decision-making procedures of the state and federal governments; and

7. Works with all involved parties to promote ecosystem approaches to river and lake fisheries management.

The Montana Council of Trout Unlimited views the following major areas as having potential impacts on the cold water fisheries:

1. Fisheries resources
2. Timber harvest
3. Wilderness
4. Riparian and aquatic habitat protection
5. Mining
6. Off-stream water use
7. Water storage
8. Agricultural practices
9. Pesticides, including herbicides
10. Harvest of Salmonid populations
11. Land use planning

Therefore, the Montana Council of Trout Unlimited supports policies that:

1. Require grazing, logging, mining and other land uses to maintain water quality;
2. Oppose logging or other vegetative removal in riparian zones unless these activities will enhance riparian-dependent objectives;
3. Support the exercise of Best Timber Management Practices;
4. Require development and implementation of sedimentation standards on streams below tim-

ber harvest activities;

5. Support the concept of cumulative impacts on a watershed containing coincidental private, state and federal timber sales;

6. Support proposals that include the protection of headwater fisheries when resolving the roadless area dilemma;

7. Support the maintenance and strengthening of the Montana Streambed Preservation Act;

8. Support the voluntary transfer of water rights from off-stream use to instream uses;

9. Support all activities that will increase instream flow;

10. Oppose out-of-state transfers of water rights;

11. Support the implementation of proactive drought planning at the local level;

12. Support the protection and maintenance of Montana's wild Salmonid species within their native ranges;

13. Oppose the further introduction of exotic species outside their native ranges where such introduction would threaten ex-

isting Salmonid populations;

14. Support public education for both youth and adult groups to increase their knowledge of Montana's cold water fisheries;

15. Support the use of integrated pest management that protects water quality;

16. Promote fishing opportunities for all anglers;

17. Support special harvest regulation and fisheries management that promote and enhance wild and native trout populations; and

18. Support land use planning that preserves or enhances water quality, fisheries, and natural scenic beauty.

The Montana Council of Trout Unlimited believes that litigation involvement should always be the last option when all other options have failed.

This Statement of Policy of the Montana Council of Trout Unlimited was adopted by the Council at Missoula, Montana, March 10, 1991.

-Marshall E. Bloom, M.D., Chairman

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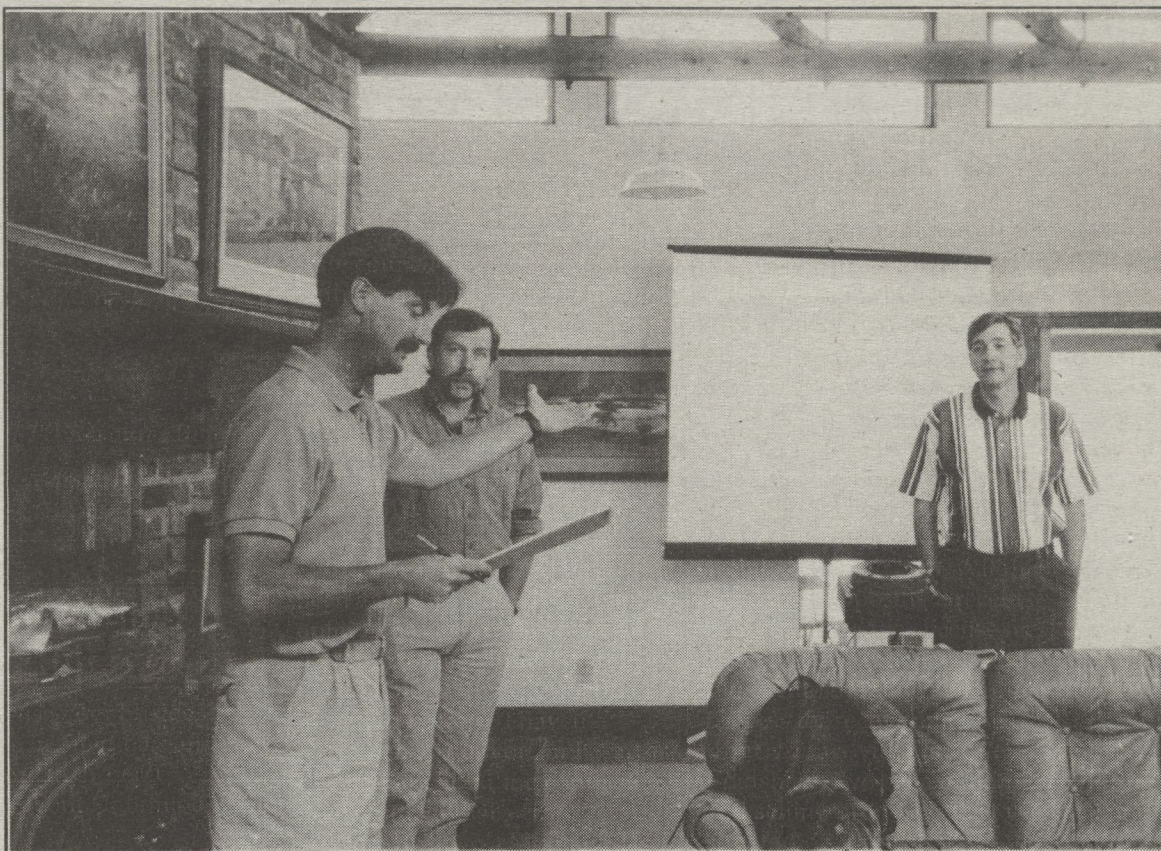
Grayling

continued from page 6

• Competition •

Another potential factor limiting the grayling population is competition with introduced fishes like brook, rainbow and brown trout. To sort out the influence of competition, a study was conducted at the headwaters of the Big Hole River that pitted grayling against brook trout in stream enclosures. Grayling select different habitats than brook trout and each species competes more among its own kind than with other species. Upcoming investigations will document the interactions between grayling, rainbow trout and brown trout.

Copies of the Grayling Recovery Plan are available from Chris Hunter, MDFWP, 1420 east 6th Ave., Helena, MT 59620. You can help the Big Hole grayling by purchasing one of the Monte Dolack "Montana Arctic Grayling" prints commissioned by the Recovery Program. Prints may be purchased by calling 1-800-775-3244 or writing Ship 'n Post, 140 Cherry St., Hamilton, MT 59840. Unsigned prints are \$37.50 including shipping. Signed prints, less than 40 of which remain, are \$150.



Montana TU Chairman Ric Smith questions Charles Grenier, Plum Creek vice president, right, and Greg Watson, Plum Creek fisheries biologist, about the company's new Environmental Forestry Program and the company's bull trout studies at the May 28 Montana TU Council meeting at Wise River, Mont.

Remember the other guy on Montana's crowded waters

By Robin Cunningham
Executive Director, FOAM

Several years ago the Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana (FOAM) developed standards of river etiquette for its members. Hoping to influence all anglers, FOAM printed signs and distributed them to flyshops throughout Montana and posted on the Big Horn River. In association with the Montana Charterboat Association, boating etiquette signs were posted at Flathead Lake and Ft. Peck Reservoir.

The need for courtesy and consideration has grown right along with the increased popularity of Montana's rivers and lakes. Maybe this is a good time to review our old points of etiquette.

We welcome any suggestions or improvements on these standards. FOAM joins with Trout Unlimited to ask that you respect the resource and other river users. By working together, we can keep Montana streams and lakes healthy and productive for all recreational users.

FOAM's guide to river etiquette

1. Floating anglers should yield to bank and wading fishermen.
2. Wade fishermen should yield to boats when there is only one navigable channel.
3. Drift anglers should never pass another boat to cut in on water being fished.
4. Never wade in a spawning area.
5. Pick up trash, even if it is not yours. Do not discard fish entrails in the water.
6. Motorboats, no wakes please.
7. Do not block access points. Launch and load boats quickly.
8. Conserve the resource. Know the fishing regulations. FOAM encourages you to release all fish.
9. Do not trespass on private land. Stay below the high water mark.
10. Don't let your actions affect someone else's fishing pleasure. Treat everyone as you would like to be treated, but understand that they may not share your sense of ethics.

Winston's casting clinic

continued from page 5

hand. It is important to note the back cast and forward cast should be in two separate planes. The back cast plane should be tipped to the side slightly and the forward cast more upright.

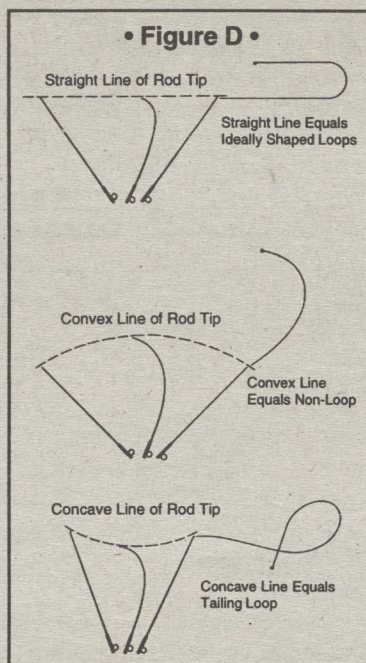
This concludes the basic casting stroke analysis. All presentation casts such as curved and slack line are simply variations of the basic stroke.

• Four Points to Remember •

1. **Watch the line** - Learn to watch your line and to recognize the types of loops you are casting. By evaluating the loops, you can determine any errors in your casts. Correct your errors by following the simple diagrams and techniques.

2. **Apply the power smoothly and progressively** - If you apply

too much power too soon or too roughly, your line will form a tail-



ing loop. This prevents the line from rolling out correctly. A tailing loop causes wind knots, and the fly to be caught on the line or to hit the rod. These loops are frequently formed when trying for long distances.

3. **Use only the power needed** - Too much power causes the rod and line to bounce excessively, resulting in rough presentation and poor line control. Practice casting a specific distance with the least power you can to complete the cast.

4. **Stop the rod to control your arc** - Stop the rod on the back and forward casts to form the size loop you want. Avoid opening your wrist past 45 degrees on the back cast.

During casting, all of the individual components work together

to present the line. When one is done incorrectly, it may affect another. If you use too much power, you may also be applying it too soon, tailing the loop. Too much power also makes it difficult to stop the rod to form the correct loop. When a rod is dropped down too far on the back cast, it is difficult to apply the power in a straight line, and too wide a loop will result. Try to integrate all of the components into a smooth, easy stroke.

We sincerely hope this brief clinic has helped you understand the fundamentals of the basic casting stroke. The only way you can learn them is to practice before you go fishing. You should spend your time on the stream enjoying your sport, not trying to learn to cast. A few hours of practice will provide a lifetime of enjoyment.

Wild Trout V at Mammoth Sept. 26-27

Note that this is in conjunction with the National TU Convention.

The Montana Council of Trout Unlimited is pleased to announce that Wild Trout V, an international symposium addressing the needs, management, and biology of wild trout and salmon populations in North America, will be held September 26-27, 1994, at Mammoth Hot Springs in Yellowstone National Park.

This symposium is held every five years and the theme of the 1994 conference is "Wild Trout in the 21st Century." Once again the symposium will be co-sponsored by Trout Unlimited, the Department of the Interior, USDA Forest Service, Environmental Protection Agency, the American Fisheries Society, and the Federation of Fly Fishers.

The two-day symposium will include speakers in panel discussions on the role of wild trout in North America (a survey of wild trout management programs across the nation), the role of habitat protection and wild trout, the role of the Endangered Species Act in wild trout management, and the future of fishing for wild trout. The symposium will have an informal atmosphere in the appropriate and beautiful setting of Mammoth Hot Springs.

Roger Barnhart, National Biological Survey, and Ron Jones, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, are symposium co-chairs, and William Shake, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is program chair.

More information is available from Barnhart at the California Cooperative Fishery Research Unit, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA 95521, (707) 826-3268 or Jones at P.O. Box 184, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190 (406) 848-7591 or (307) 344-2280.



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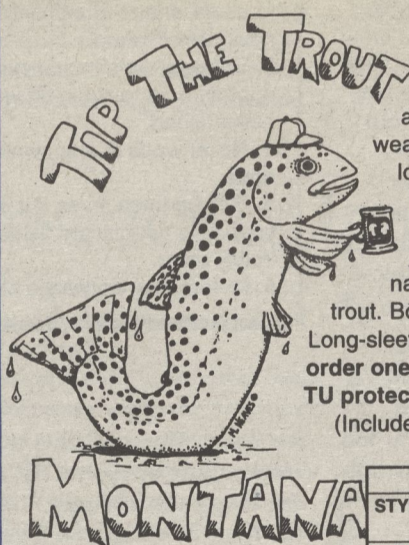
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