



# Trout Line

Newsletter of the Montana Council of Trout Unlimited

## Whirling Disease strikes the Madison

Changes in store for Montana rivers

By Tom Anacker  
Madison-Gallatin Chapter

The Madison River entered a new era on Dec. 19, 1994, with the discovery of Whirling Disease. Although the Madison continues to offer exceptional angling, changes in the fishery are anticipated. The rainbow trout population in the upper river declined from 3,000 per mile in 1991 to 300 per mile in 1994. Studies done by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MDFWP) implicate Whirling Disease as the likely cause. The brown trout population has remained stable and, in fact, may have increased slightly. Even with the decimation of the rainbow numbers, overall trout numbers in the Madison remain higher than many other heavily fished Montana waters.

The Whirling Disease outbreak appears to have originated near the junction of the West Fork and main stem of the Madison River. While the source of the infection is as yet uncertain, it is suspected that it resulted from an illegal fish introduction in about 1987. The causative organism has been detected in fish as far upstream as the Reynolds Pass area and as far downstream as the bypass reach of the Madison immediately below Ennis Dam. Tests in the Madison above Quake Lake

Dam and in the Norris section of the lower river have been negative so far.

In mid-February, Whirling Disease was confirmed in the Ruby River near Sheridan and an illegal fish introduction is suspected in that instance, too. Montana is the nineteenth state where the disease has been documented.

Whirling Disease is caused by a myxosporean parasite, *Myxobolus cerebralis*. This parasite infects salmonids and destroys the cartilage of young fish, particularly in the area of the brain case. Destruction of unossified cartilage occurs and leads to skeletal deformities. Young fish with active disease may swim in a circular pattern when feeding or frightened, hence the name Whirling Disease. The neural system also is affected, causing dark abnormal pigmentation near the tail, a condition known as "Black Tail." Older fish can become infected, but fail to show the characteristic whirling behavior or Black Tail.

The parasite generally does not kill the young fish directly, but the whirling behavior renders them susceptible to predation. In addition, they have difficulty feeding in the wild and may have a lowered resistance to other diseases.

The complex two-host life cycle of *Myxobolus cerebralis* was

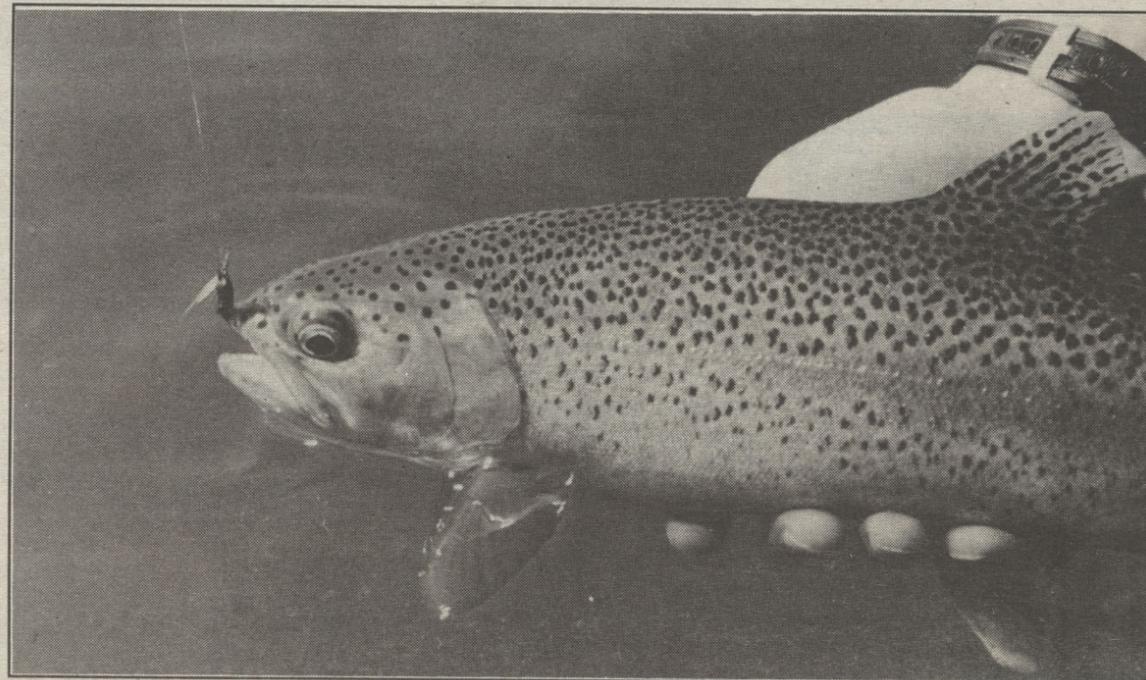


Photo courtesy of Rob Breeding

Rainbow trout numbers in the Madison River have plummeted since being infected with Whirling Disease.

### Don't contribute to the problem

Anglers and boaters might contribute to the spread of Whirling Disease between river systems by the inadvertent transfer of mud, water or plant material containing viable spores. To minimize the possibility of spread by anglers, the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks advises these

procedures:

- Check and remove all mud and aquatic plants from vehicles, trailers, boats, anchors, waders, boots and fishing equipment before leaving access sites on infected waters.
- Drain boats and equipment of water. Do not transport any river or lake water from one river basin to

another river basin.

- Do not dispose of fish entrails, heads or other byproducts in any body of water, including any waste water systems that communicate with rivers or lakes.
- Do not transfer live fish from one body of water into other waters.

not understood until the 1980s. In infected fish, the parasite exists as an environmentally resistant spore, about the size of a red blood cell. The spores are released into the water when the

infected fish die or are eaten by predators. Once in the water, the spores are taken up by an aquatic worm, *Tubifex tubifex*. In the worm's digestive tract, each spore undergoes a transforma-

tion into eight dendritic forms called *Triactinomyxon gyrosalmo*. These forms of the parasite, characterized by a sporoplasm head and several hook-like ap-

continued on page 6

## Halftime at 1995 Legislature: good news and bad

By Bruce Farling  
Montana TU Executive Director

During the first half of the 1995 Montana Legislature, lawmakers savaged many of the state's long-standing environmental protection laws like rottweilers on a road-kill. But despite the vicious attacks on environmental protection, Montana TU was able to keep alive many of the bills on its priority list.

First, the good news: HB 472, the bill allowing

private interests like TU to lease water rights for in-stream flows passed the House by a resounding 90 to 10 vote. Sponsored by Rep. Dick Knox (R-Winifred), HB 472 is the product of eight months of negotiation involving TU's state council, the Montana Wildlife Federation and the state's four main agricultural groups. It encompasses about 75 percent of the bills we tried to pass the last two legislatures, but which were defeated after busloads of opponents stormed

the capitol in Helena.

The measure's prospects in the Senate look good, and if the bill passes, TU will have been part of an incremental but historic step forward for in-stream flow protection. The good guys in moving this legislation have been Knox, as well as Gov. Marc Racicot, who allowed his Consensus Council to facilitate the negotiations. They deserve thanks. The House Appropriations Committee (Chairman Tom Zook) needs to hear that

the Consensus Council does work and that it should continue to be funded.

Representative Hal Harper (D-Helena) has taken on much

of TU's agenda this session, and he's doing a superb job getting bills through a minefield of rabid anti-government and anti-

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Ad deadline for the Summer 1995 issue is April 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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# Guest perspective... '94 not good to trout

By Clair Brazington, President  
Magic City Fly Fishers Chapter

1994 was not a good year for the trout in Montana and Yellowstone National Park:

- During the year, we had fish kills resulting from stream flow problems on the Big Hole, the Ruby, the Clark Fork (of the Columbia) and other lesser streams.

- We learned that lake trout are gaining a foothold in Yellowstone Lake. If this is the result of a "bucket biologist" at

work, it represents, in my view, the environmental crime of the decade. To deliberately destroy one of the few remaining homes of the native Yellowstone cutthroat trout would indeed be a despicable act.

- In late December 1994, the news from the Madison also was grim. Whirling Disease appears to be at work in one of the state's—indeed, the nation's—premier rainbow trout streams.

I mention these events be-

cause it is important for each fly fisher to take note that these events and others like them occur each and every year. Without a dedicated and sustained effort on behalf of trout and sport fishing on our part, the future could become a time when we spend our recreational hours remembering the "good old days" instead of fishing.

Each person who cares for our sport and the environment needs to become active and do what he or she can to change

things for the better. I cannot imagine Montana without Yellowstone cutthroat trout or bull trout or a Madison River without wild rainbow trout, but without some luck and a great deal of effort, these things may become reality.

Keep in mind that the Legislature is in session. They could help if they wanted to.

Reprinted from *Hackle Bender*, the monthly publication of the Magic City Fly Fishers, with permission from Clair Brazington.

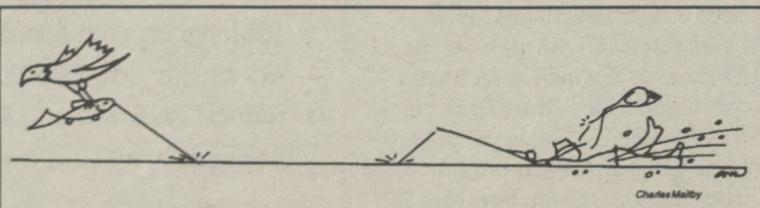
## Thanks, TU faithful

The Montana Council of Trout Unlimited would like to acknowledge those who have made generous donations recently. Some contributions were in response to a mailing on in-stream flow, some in response to an appeal by Bud Lilly to folks who attended the National TU Convention, and still others were unsolicited. From substantial to modest donations, all are equally appreciated because they reflect a concern for Montana's wild and native trout and the environments they live in.

Thanks to all of you for your generosity.

Dr. Irving Weissman Family  
Mike Geary  
Dr. Robert Ratcheson  
Peggy Ratcheson  
Dr. Mary Anne Guggenheim  
Dr. Peter Moskovitz  
Rick Brasch  
Len and Sandy Sargent  
Greg Tollefson  
Rex Carey  
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## Chapter notes

### West Slope Chapter — Missoula

The Westslope Chapter in Missoula meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, 2291 West Broadway. A fly-tying demonstration begins the evening, followed by a speaker, usually with slides or a video. Meetings are free and open to the public.

In September we set up a phone tree of volunteers for stream work projects. We had six work days with from two to six people showing up each day. All but one of these projects were on tributaries of the Blackfoot River, funded by the Big Blackfoot Chapter and coordinated by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. These mostly involved planting various shrubs and trees to reestablish streamside vegetation. Hard work, but rewarding.

The other project was funded from Milldam Dam fish mitigation monies and directed by Brent Mabbott, biologist with Montana Power Co. On this one, we hauled some gravel in wheelbarrows over some marshy ground and dumped and raked it into a small spring creek to provide spawning gravel. Next spring several volunteers will plant streamside vegetation here also.

Many thanks to the dozen or so people who took a day off from hunting or other fall activities to help the fishery. It was perhaps not as fun as many of you thought, especially on cold days, but we did a lot of good for spawning areas, and subsequently, the mainstem.

-Steve Schombel, past president

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Bruce Farling:

A very special thank you for traveling to Butte and speaking to the George Grant Chapter of TU Board of Directors. It was a very informative evening, and we would once again like to applaud your efforts in so many directions. We were especially excited concerning the dialogue with the agricultural public on several different issues.

As you requested, I have

enclosed a copy of our comments, which were sent to the DNRC Draft of the Upper Clark Fork River Basin Water Management Plan. We are very excited about your legislative agenda, and hope you will keep us informed as to the progress of the different issues you listed.

Sincerely,  
Scott Reynolds, president  
George Grant Chapter, Butte  
November 17, 1994

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# Rock Creek Advisory Council Missoula-based group protecting 'blue ribbon' fishing in Western Montana

By Ellen Knight, Executive Director  
Rock Creek Advisory Council

Since 1986 the Rock Creek Advisory Council has worked to establish a strong presence in the renowned Rock Creek drainage, 30 miles east of Missoula. Although RCAC has sponsored a variety of conservation activities, ranging from stream rehabilitation to monitoring resource extraction activities, the council's major focus has been to work with landowners in acquiring conservation easements.

To-date easements are in effect on six key parcels, assuring that almost 3,000 acres and about eight miles of strategically located Rock Creek frontage will remain free of development. The council has been pleased to have the assistance of the Montana Land Reliance in several of these efforts.

TU members should be especially proud of the council's accomplishments,



since TU has been the council's most committed partner. The council was formed because the West Slope Chapter of Trout Unlimited took aggressive action when needed. When large regional powerlines threatened the drainage, the local chapter joined conservationists from the National and Montana Wildlife Federations, and with two state agencies, the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and the Department of Natural Resources, in a model of cooperative action. Together they protested the planned powerline route, which was to cross the lower portion of the creek and potential wilderness areas.

Although the big lines were not routed, the group was able to establish Rock Creek's national reputation as a

premier fishing stream and bargained with Montana Power and other energy companies for the creation of a \$1.65 million Rock Creek Trust Fund. The fund has supplied the financing for the council's conservation work.

The trust monies are no longer sufficient, however, and the council has serious work ahead. Conservation easements are very expensive. Some major landowners are growing older. Attempts at development are pressuring the area, and consequently the price of land is increasing. The council has an effective life of less than five years without a cadre of dedicated financial partners. Last year National TU and the West Slope Chapter became partners, along with eight other donors, in raising more than \$85,000 toward the council's Rock Creek conservation program.

Trout Unlimited's work with the council continues, with two dedicated people serving as TU representatives on the

council—outdoor writer and Five Valleys Land Trust Director Greg Tollefson, who serves as RCAC chairman, and Karl Englund, one of two attorneys responsible for obtaining the trust fund. Both serve TU and the Rock Creek admirably.

The council's vision for Rock Creek is large. To meet our protection goals for this remarkable drainage, we will need to raise between \$3 and \$13 million.

TU members can help once again. The council will be asking for continued financial support from National TU and chapters. Other significant assistance would be to help identify contacts—people who love "blue ribbon" fishing in a beautiful, unspoiled drainage and have the desire, wherewithal or connections to assist. If you have leads, please contact Tollefson or Englund in Missoula, or the council's executive director, Ellen Knight, at P.O. Box 9021, Missoula, MT 59807, (406) 728-2841.

Open lands and frontage await protection.

## Hook Up With Montana and Trout Unlimited—On Line!

By George Ochenski and Marshall Bloom

Anybody out there in TU land want to read the bills the Montana Legislature is considering? Maybe you'd like to comment on how the state should deal with the increasing problems of river crowding, or review Environmental Assessments on state and private developments, or peruse the state budget. Want to know what the Fish and Game Commission did or find out the latest information on the Whirling Disease outbreak on the Madison? Well, now you can.

The state's Electronic Bulletin Board System (BBS) has been in existence since 1989, slowly evolving as a mechanism to bring information about state government to the citizens of Montana without the usual costs and delays associated with producing, copying, and mailing government documents. How? By posting the documents in electronic format on a computer that's accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Thanks to the wonder of modern telecommunications, if you own or have access to a computer and a modem, your electronic avenue is just a toll-free phone call away: 1-800-962-1729 in Montana and 444-5648 in the Helena area. TU members outside Montana can access the BBS by dialing 406-444-5648.

### • Legislative Information •

The 1995 Legislature is the first to take full advantage of this feature. It posts a variety of up-to-the-minute information including:

- Daily and cumulative bill draft requests
- Daily and cumulative introduced

bills

- Daily status sheets detailing progress of bills
- House & Senate hearing schedules
- Governor's Budget
- Full text of House & Senate bills (all versions)

### • River Crowding Conference •

Late last year the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks opened a forum on River Crowding on the state bulletin board. The concept here is simple -- rather than drive to Helena and meet in some conference room, interested citizens can sign on to the bulletin board and go to the On-Line River Crowding Conference.

There they will find a wide variety of files full of background information, reports from previous meetings, suggestions for possible policy options, etc. Using a simple procedure known as "downloading," any of the files may be copied to your home computer where you can print or read them at your leisure.

Conference users also can read on-going dialogues between "conferees," with lively and insightful debate on the variety of issues that arise when fly anglers, outfitters, floaters, motorized boats, jet skiers and jet boaters try to use the same water. Those who find the dialogue fascinating may wish to take a more active role and leave comments for DFWP, suggest policies or ask questions. For example, DFWP on the state BBS lists all the press releases, including the latest information on the Whirling Disease outbreak.

### • Whirling Disease On-Line Conference •

DFWP also has established an on-line conference specifically dealing with

Here are e-mail addresses for Montana and National TU:

- ☐ Bruce Farling, Executive Director — Farling@aol.com
- ☐ George Ochenski, Legislative Affairs — Ochenski@aol.com
- ☐ Marshall Bloom, Regional Vice President — MTJSBloom@aol.com
- ☐ National Trout Unlimited — TroutU@aol.com

Montana Electronic Bulletin Board Numbers:

- 1-800-962-1729 (Toll Free, Montana only)
- 444-5648 (Helena area)
- 1-406-444-5648 (Outside Montana)



Whirling Disease. This service allows anglers to find out the latest information about the outbreak, ask specific questions and make specific comments to DFWP personnel on this important issue. It is accessible through the state BBS, using the numbers given above.

### • Other State Information •

The state also maintains a host of other information on the electronic bulletin board, including but not limited to:

- Areas for each agency of state government
- Public meeting notices and agendas
- Drought reports
- All environmental assessments
- Rule-making notices for proposed administrative rules
- Agency reports mandated by statute
- Parks development proposals
- Road and weather reports

### • Get On-Line— Get Involved with Your Future •

The state's system is still evolving. Although there are certain limitations and problems with graphics and formatting, all in all the system is a tremendous boon to public interaction with the government decision-making process. No matter where in this huge and magnifi-

cent state you live, you can plug in, call up, and get involved at no cost to you and considerable benefit to the future.

### • Hooking up with Trout Unlimited •

Once you are plugged in, you also can use On-Line Services to talk to TU, although not via the State BBS. In Montana, Montana TU staff and several volunteer leaders can be reached "On-Line," and others soon will follow. There are a number of subscription On-Line services, however, America On-Line (AOL) is the one that most Montana TU leaders currently are tied in with. It is also the one that National TU is hooked up with. Unlike the State BBS, this service is not free, but considering the time saved not having to play "phone tag" and the convenience of being able to send messages anywhere in the world any time of day, the rates are quite reasonable. After signing up, you can help us establish e-mail "trees" for legislative monitoring, rapidly developing resource issues, fishing tips, etc.

If you have communication software and a modem, you can access the AOL Bulletin Board Service at 1-800-827-5808. Or, you can call AOL at 1-800-827-6364 for help and information. Sign up soon! It's easy to use and you will reap the benefits.

# Fly fishing exhibit in Missoula a must-see!

By Darla Bruner-Wilson  
Education Curator  
Historical Museum at Fort Missoula

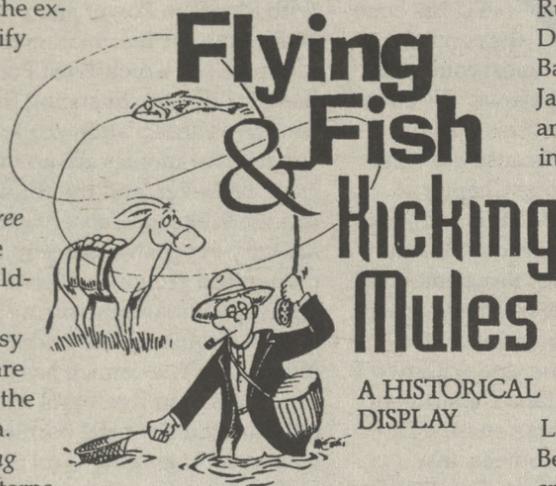
**F**lying Fish and Kicking Mules, a year-long exhibit that relates the rich history of fly-fishing and outfitting in western and southwestern Montana, opened in September 1994 at the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula. *Flying Fish and Kicking Mules* explores western Montana's rich fly-fishing history, as well as the influence and contributions of wilderness guides and outfitters.

The exhibit contains vintage photographs and historic objects from both private and museum collections, together with works by Montana artists and writers. Fly fishing and outfitting gear used by Montana's pioneer fly fishermen and guides complements the exhibit's text, which was gleaned from the writings of Norman Maclean, George Grant, Pat Barnes, Russell Chatham, Smoke Elser, Greg Tollefson and Gary LaFontaine.

After a tribute to the Lewis

and Clark Expedition, the exhibit moves on to identify the area's sport fishes, and discusses their major food sources by way of basic stream entomology. Two videos -- *Three Men, Three Rivers* (produced by the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks) and *The Way of the Trout* (courtesy of Trout Unlimited) -- are shown continuously in the exhibit's education area.

*Flying Fish and Kicking Mules* addresses fly patterns developed early in this century specifically for the waters of western and southwestern Montana. A number of pioneering tiers and anglers are accorded fitting recognition and tribute. Franz Pott, Jack Boehme, Norman Means (Paul Bunyan) and George Croonenberghs of Missoula; Jack Beaty and George Grant of Butte; and Doug O'looney and Pat and Sigrid Barnes of Helena adapted existing patterns and also cre-



ated new patterns with names like Sandy Mite, Lady Mite, the Bunyan Bug, Picket Pin, and Sofa Pillow. The exhibit also gives a history of the R.L. Winston Rod Co., tracing its origins from the San Francisco Bay area to its location in Twin Bridges.

Fly fishing as an art form also is a central theme of *Flying Fish and Kicking Mules*. The exhibit is complemented by works created by Montana artists, including Dave Whitlock, Harvey Eckert,

Russell Chatham, Monte Dolack, George Weisel and Pat Barnes. Taxidermy mounts by Jack Boehme, Duncan Gilchrist, and Doug Wright are fascinating examples of Montana's trophy fish that were preserved to invoke proud memories of good times, good friends, and great fishing.

The massive George Grant Collection is a fitting tribute to the state's premier fly tiers: Don Martinez, Franz Pott, W. L. Beaty, and Norman Means. Because many of these early craftsmen did not leave written instructions, George Grant meticulously dissected their artificial flies to learn the secrets of their construction.

Realizing the wealth of information assembled by George Grant, the Big Hole River Foundation built a number of hardwood exhibit cases to safely and attractively house his collection. The collection of more than 700 hand-woven flies was exhibited for many years at West Yellowstone and Ennis before

its loan to the Art Chateau in Butte in 1990. This unique exhibit is on year-long loan to the Historical Museum, courtesy of the Big Hole River Foundation.

The public reaction to *Flying Fish and Kicking Mules* has been very positive and its popularity, based on visitors' comments and attendance figures, has been consistent since the exhibit opened. A variety of programs, which are designed to offer the public additional opportunities to learn about and experience fly fishing and wilderness outfitting, will accompany the exhibit.

*Flying Fish and Kicking Mules* will be on display in the North Gallery (on the second floor) at the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula through September 3, 1995. Make plans to attend this informative exhibit and learn about the history of trout fishing in our great state. More information is available from the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula, Bldg. 322, Fort Missoula, Missoula, MT 59802; (406) 728-3476.

## Memorial fund remembers friend of the Madison

**Y**ou might have run across Guy Patrick Hogan on the Madison River. Each summer, Pat made the trip to Pony with a couple of friends and an ample supply of flies tied back home in Fort Worth, Texas. Although he had fished in New Mexico, Colorado and Alaska, his favorite stream was the Madison.

Consequently, when Pat passed away last November after an extended illness, his family requested that memorial contributions be made to Montana Trout Unlimited for the Ennis Dam Relicensing project. The goal of this project (which was featured the Fall 1993 *Trout Line*) is to improve the fishery in the Madison River below Ennis Dam by having Montana Power Co. make changes either to the dam or its operation. According

to Pat's son, Jon, "Dad loved fishing on the Madison and would have liked a project with the goal of adding miles of quality fishing water to this river."

Pat began fly fishing for bass in his teens around Fort Worth, much to the puzzlement of his father, who fished with live bait and artificial lures. In his thirties, Pat learned about fly fishing for trout and fished in northern New Mexico and later in Colorado. Eventually he heard about Montana and the Madison.

Pat introduced many to fly fishing, including his wife, Mildred, and son, Jon, and they shared his love for the sport. Pat became an avid fly-tier and often said, "You haven't really lived until you catch a trout on a fly that you have tied."

Jon related, "Dad was a sportsman all his life, loved the

mountains and was dedicated to his family. He was married for 46 years and spent much time with his children. He coached every sport from baseball to ice hockey. He touched many lives in a variety of ways and will be missed by all those who knew him."

Montana TU, with the help of Pat Hogan's memorial contributions, is working to improve fishing in the Madison for future generations. What more fitting tribute could there be for this fine gentleman from Fort Worth?

Montana TU would like to acknowledge the family members and friends of Guy Patrick Hogan who have contributed to the memorial:

Herman K. Clark, Fort Worth; Marie & Ward Collier Jr., Fort Worth; Jack R. Dehm, Waco, Texas; Sam E. Dehm,



GUY PATRICK 'PAT' HOGAN

Waco; Judy Dominy, Fort Worth; Richard C. Elledge, Fort Worth; Mon. P.M. Watercolor Class, Fort Worth Woman's Club, Fort Worth; Mrs. Frank Gladden, Arlington, Texas; Victoria Henry, Fort Worth; Mrs. G.P. Hogan, Fort Worth; Al Horton, Fort Worth; Mrs. Clarence V. Iba, Fort Worth; B.J. Jenkins, Fort Worth; Sandra Keel, Fort Worth; John R.

Kraft, Plano, Texas; W.J. Leatherwood, Meridian, Texas; Margaret J. Lowdon, Fort Worth; Joseph B. Martin, Fort Worth; W.K. McCluer, Graham, Texas; Corrine F. McCoy, Fort Worth; McKenna & Cuneo, Washington, D.C.; Ann H. Ouellette, Benbrook, Texas; Patricia Parsons, Fort Worth; Lila W. Pritchard, Fort Worth; Robert J. Rigdon, Fort Worth; Mrs. Robert Schutts, Fort Worth; Jan K. Slaughter, Fort Worth; Jacqueline Smith, Fort Worth; Dan C. Wilson, Fort Worth; Kenneth B. Wilson, Aledo, Texas; Brett and Brenda Witherspoon, Fort Worth; and Mrs. J.P. Wood, Fort Worth.

By Marshall Bloom

What were we doing fishing the Bitterroot at 6 a.m. on a rainy, cold August morning? At the party the night before, Phil had said that Donna Metcalf would probably like a few fresh trout for breakfast the next morning. And so there we were, wading wet in the rain, with the usual luck! How many years ago was that? I can't even guess.

I never knew Montana without Phil, his wife Robin and later,

## Thank you, Phil Tawney

their family, too. From those early times more than 20 years ago, trying to start land-use planning in the Bitterroot, to the Montana Environmental Information Center Board meetings with Len and Sandy Sargent in the late '70s, and most recently, to the Teller Wildlife Refuge Board meetings, there was always Phil. An optimistic, happy warrior.

Phil died early this year, a too-

young death from a relentless leukemia. Recollections of Phil will permeate every conversation about the facets of Montana that are progressive and positive - MEIC, Teller Refuge, Montana Land Reliance, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and countless other things. As Representative Pat Williams said, "He never exempted himself."

Much of the environmental law

that protects Montana's streams and fish is the direct product of Phil's vision and labors. All who enjoy Montana's trout, either by fishing for them or by just knowing they are there, owe an immense debt to him.

And the run on the Bitterroot where we fished that chill morning? Unlike much of Montana, it will always look the same. A conservation easement with the Land Reliance ensures it.

Thank you, Phil Tawney.

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# George Grant & the Big Hole: One man, one river

Jim Masker, Executive Director  
Big Hole River Foundation

**C**atch-and-release is the only true form of fishing. You take from the river, and you give back."

George Grant was speaking literally at this point in our conversation. By late afternoon, however, I came to sense this phrase served as a metaphor for his passionate relationship with the Big Hole River.

George's deeply-felt, unflinching commitment to trout and the wild, free-flowing rivers they inhabit is about to enter its seventh decade. The future of Montana's rivers will depend on how well we learn the lesson that giving back to the river includes much more than simply releasing the trout we catch.

Montana TUers have had a number of opportunities to know what Butte's George Grant has given to the rivers, fisheries and fly fishers of the West. As a testimony to his life-long commitment to fly fishing and river conservation, the Butte TU chapter is named for him. In addition, George is a charter member of the Montana TU Advisory Board.

In the 1930s, George began to question the precept that western rainbows and browns could best be caught using soft-hackled and soft-bodied flies or nymphs. His keen environmental perception led him to develop a new kind of fly.

When inspecting what the trout themselves preferred to eat, George wrote in *The Master Fly Weaver*, "Trout in high western rivers are accustomed to

feeding on... stonefly nymphs that have thick, strong legs, sharp protruding wing cases, and bodies that are encased in tough skins that are anything but soft.... I have examined the stomach contents of trout that have had snail shells, rockworm cases, and spine-rayed sculpins present. I can not buy the soft-body theory to the exclusion of such materials as monofilament or brass wire."

Thus, George's penchant to buck conventional wisdom if something seems more sensible led to his 1939 patent for the woven hair hackle. It produces a sturdy, bristly fly that holds up well to the environmental conditions of western rivers, and most importantly, trout enjoy the snack. The most famous fly tied in this manner is the "Black Creeper," which George still ties today for the Big Hole River Foundation. As a result of George's innovative fly-tying, the Federation of Fly Fishermen presented him with the Wayne "Buzz" Busek Memorial Fly Tying Award in 1973.

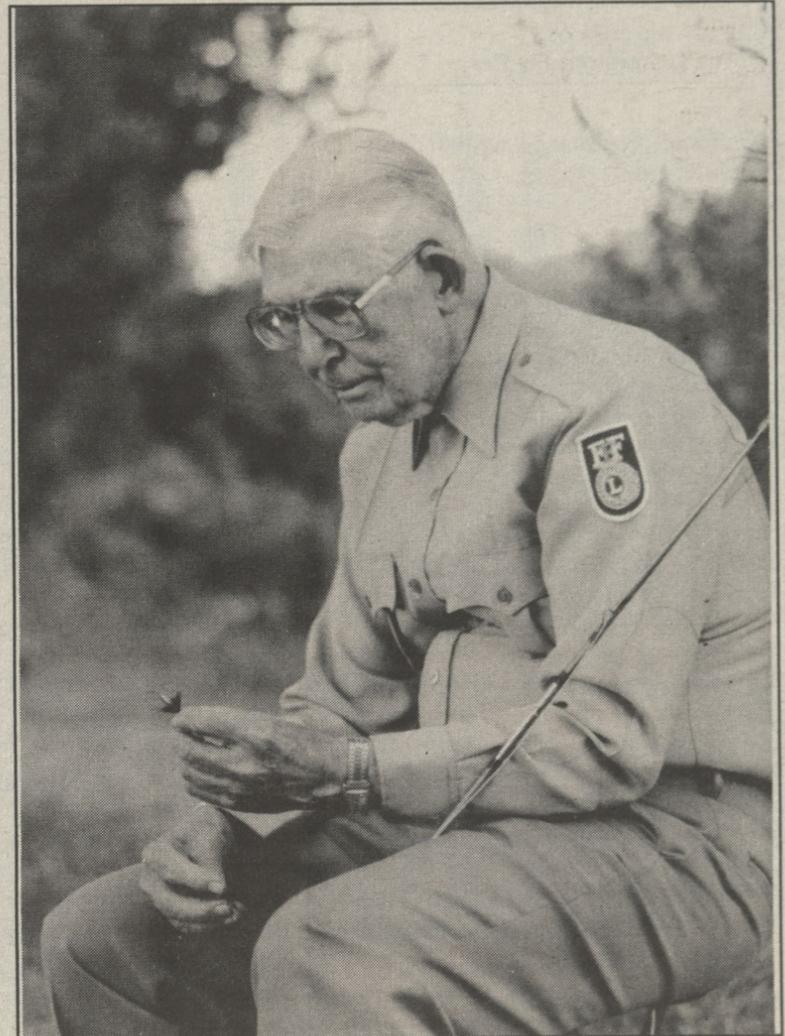
George also published the *River Rat* during the 1970s. The *River Rat* began as the newsletter of The Rocky Mountain River Rats, Butte's TU chapter. After he published a handful of issues for the local chapter, the Montana Council of Trout Unlimited asked George to produce the bimonthly newsletter for the state organization. George is quick to point out that this experience was one of the most rewarding undertakings and accomplishments of his life.

The newsletter provided George a forum that allowed

him to move beyond his recognition as a renowned fly-tier and into the realm of a highly acclaimed conservation activist. Under George's guidance, the *River Rat* gained a national audience and successfully promoted streambed preservation laws, catch-and-release regulations on stretches of the Madison and Big Hole rivers, rejection of the proposed Reichle Dam on the Big Hole, and awareness of the recreational and economic value of wild trout rivers in Montana.

While George was editor, the *River Rat* received the TU national communications award and the Federation of Fly Fishermen's Arnold Gingrich Award. This recognition came to a man who describes himself as "an aging man with a Casper Milquetoast demeanor and a Barney Fife physique... with a little Walter Mitty..., who look(s) upon (himself) as being a crusader..."

In 1971-72 George published two spiral-bound books that are classic fly fishing memorabilia. The first, *The Art of Weaving Hair Hackles for Trout Flies*, provided readers with the how-to skills and lists of materials necessary to imitate George's distinctive flies. The second, *Montana Trout Flies*, provided a similar how-to format but with attention to the flies of other outstanding Western tiers. Then, in 1980 he achieved the pinnacle for any writer — two limited edition, hardcover books of his were published by a company in Oregon. These books, *The Master Fly Weaver* and an expanded version of *Montana Trout Flies*, have become collector's items.



GEORGE GRANT

In the late 1980s, George and the Big Hole River Foundation began producing a series of small-format, 40-50 page booklets containing previously published material from George's and the *River Rat's* archives. These booklets contain George's fishing stories, essays, biographies of fly-tiers and fly fishers, and how-to tying tips.

George comments with pride that he views his books and

publishing efforts as another extremely gratifying accomplishment of his life. His publications, except for the two hardcover volumes, are currently available from the Big Hole River Foundation.

In the late 1980s George said, "I figured I needed to focus on one specific river and focus all my efforts on it. The river has been good to me and I owe it more than I can ever repay."

## Grant founded Big Hole foundation

**I**n 1989 George and some of his supporters founded the Big Hole River Foundation. Its mission is to preserve and enhance the free-flowing character of the Big Hole River and to protect its watershed and wild trout fishery.

The fundamental principle of the foundation is rooted in the belief that all stakeholders ultimately have an interest in maintaining the river. As George wrote in the initial foundation brochure, "There is and has been a basic, almost unavoidable conflict between ranchers... and those people who believe the river should be used as medium for growing wild trout. It is a conflict that is detrimental to both sides and should be resolved. Instead of carrying on this fruitless, never-ending feud with the rancher, we must place ourselves in a position where we are able to do things for him that he cannot do for himself."

To date, the Big Hole River Founda-

tion has funded two major water pumping projects to minimize the impacts of irrigation on the river. The foundation also has provided financial support for the Arctic Grayling Restoration Project and has helped Herb and Joyce Hall of Glen host their annual Kid's Day on the Big Hole. All of the projects undertaken by the Foundation are funded by annual memberships, charitable donations, and by the sale of George's flies and books to people from all over the country who share his vision and passion for the Big Hole River.

George says that another gratifying accomplishment of his life has been his efforts to raise money by tying flies and selling books for the foundation and for other river-based conservation groups. He figures that over the years his flies and books have fetched somewhere on the order of \$100,000 for these organizations.

While George seldom mentions it, he received the prestigious Chevron Conservation Award in 1992. This national award recognized George's lifetime commitment to "mak(ing) a difference in our nation's environment through protection and enhancement of our natural resources." In classic George Grant style, he donated the prize money to the Big Hole River Foundation.

Have you ever fished, floated, driven along, or simply sat and enjoyed the beauty of the Big Hole River? If you have, you have benefitted from the tireless efforts of this unique individual. Please consider joining George's Big Hole River Foundation. Contact: Jim Masker, Executive Director, BHRF, Box 3894, Butte, MT 59702. Jim can be reached at his daytime work number at (406) 494-4572, or at home in the evening at (406) 782-3236.

- Jim Masker



**Big Hole River Foundation**  
Jim Masker, Ex. Dir.  
BHRF - Box 3894  
Butte, MT 59702

### Our Mission

Preserve and enhance the free-flowing Big Hole River and protect its watershed and wild trout fishery

### Our Goals

- Assure adequate water quality and quantity
- Enhance riparian conditions
- Preserve the river corridor's ecological integrity, natural beauty and quality of wildlife
- Establish cooperative projects with public and private landowners

### Our Need

Members who believe the basis for progress in the new West is cooperation and consensus

# Fly Tier's Corner *Beadhead patterns, part 2*

From the Desk of  
The Yellowstone Fly Tier

This is the second in a three-part series on beadhead patterns.

In part one of "Beadhead Patterns" (Fall 1994 issue), we covered a little bit of the background on the imitation, along with two styles of the Hare's Ear Nymph. In Part Two, we are going to explore some other patterns that have proven to be effective as Beadhead imitations.

## • BEADHEAD • RED MIDGE WORM

Hooks: Tiemco 2487 or 2457  
TMC 947 BL  
Sizes: 12 to 20  
14 to 20

Thread: Red  
Bead: Gold  
Underbody: Red Thread  
Body: Red Lace (Midge Larva Lace)

**Note:** This can also be very effective when tied in olive.

## • K-FLASH BEADHEAD • COPPER NYMPH

Hooks: TMC 2487 or 2457  
Sizes: 12 to 20  
Thread: Black  
Bead: Gold  
Rib: Copper Wire  
Abdomen: 2 to 4 strands of Copper  
Krystal Flash, wrapped  
Thorax: Black Rabbit Fur Dubbing  
Collar: Black Philo Plume

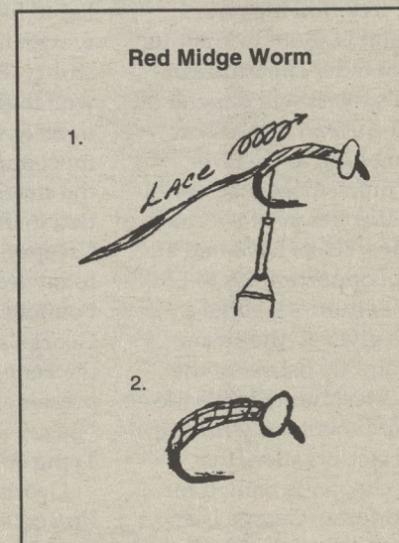
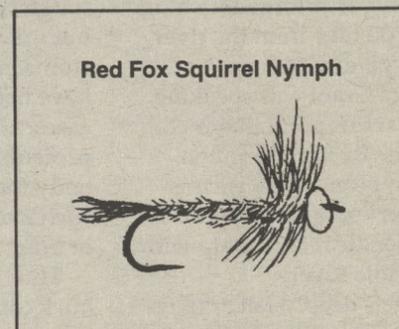
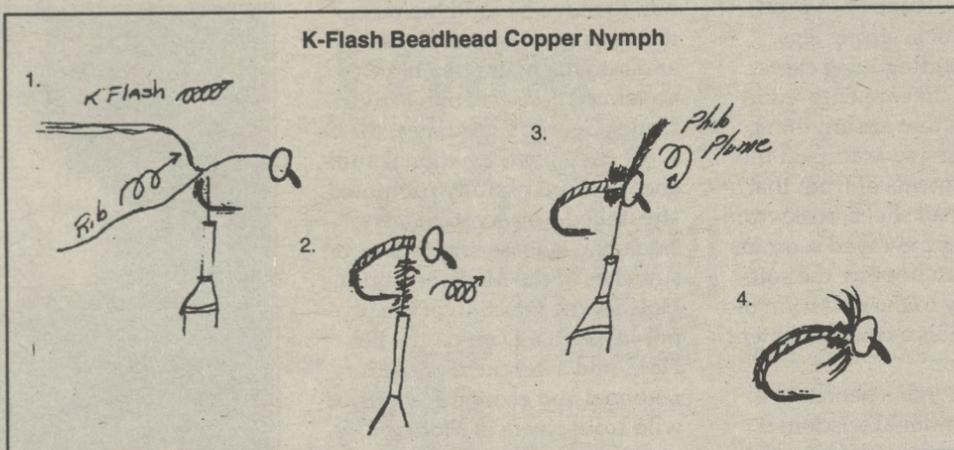
**Note:** This pattern can be tied in several different color variations, and some of them even work.

## • BEADHEAD • RED FOX SQUIRREL NYMPH

Hooks: TMC 947 BL  
Sizes: 4 to 20  
Thread: Brown  
Bead: Gold or Copper  
Tails: Clump of Guardhairs from the back of the R.F. Squirrel  
Rib: Oval Gold Tinsel  
Abdomen: R.F. Squirrel Belly Fur Blend  
Thorax: R.F. Squirrel Back Fur Blend, spun in a dubbing loop

Enjoy & Good Fishin'

The Yellowstone Fly Tier



## Whirling Disease

continued from page 1  
pendages, are highly infectious to trout. The worms release *Triactinomyxa* into the water in large numbers and they enter the fish via the skin, the gills and the digestive tract. Once inside the fish, the parasites multiply in cartilage and develop into the original spore forms. Diagnosis of the infection is done by removing cartilage cores between the eyes of the fish and staining the samples to identify the spores.

Rainbow trout are the most susceptible members of the trout family. Kokanee salmon also are said to be very sensitive. Brook trout are less susceptible. Brown trout appear to resist developing clinically apparent disease, although they can be infected.

It is believed that Whirling Disease arose in Europe and that the native European brown trout developed a resistance to disease as they co-evolved with the parasite. Very little is known about the susceptibility of Montana's native salmonids,

the grayling, various cutthroats and the bull trout. It is uncertain if natural resistance can develop in wild rainbow trout that survive the infection.

In the United States, the disease is primarily one of hatchery trout and fisheries based on hatchery stocking. Little is known about its course in wild trout fisheries, like those in Montana. The primary factor linked to spread between river systems has been the transfer of infected live fish. There has been little success in other states in controlling the spread of Whirling Disease. Trout hatcheries in Montana are tested and have consistently remained free of Whirling Disease. This is one reason an illegal introduction has been suspected as a source for the Madison outbreak. A bill to prohibit the private transfer of live fish within or into the state of Montana was introduced in the Montana Legislature at the request of Montana TU, but its fate is uncertain at this time.

MDFWP estimates that Whirling Disease is spreading

downstream in the Madison River at a rate of between five and 15 miles per year. Upstream spread is harder to gauge, but it is thought to be about two miles per year. The disease is expected to spread downstream to the Missouri and probably to other rivers in the Missouri River system.

MDFWP has begun testing fish in river drainages across the state. As indicated above, virtually nothing is known about the disease in wild trout populations, and the Madison fishery will serve as an involuntary experimental laboratory. It is hoped that the remaining rainbow population in the Madison either are now or will become resistant to Whirling Disease. Critical research is needed in Whirling Disease, and the Madison-Gallatin TU Chapter and Montana TU are exploring ways to promote this type of investigation. Gov. Marc Racicot and the Montana congressional delegation have pledged support for these efforts.

The entry of Whirling Disease into Montana's waters heralds a

## Support emergency regs

On Feb. 24, 1995, the Montana Fish and Game Commission adopted two emergency regulations for the upper Madison River.

The first regulation is a fishing closure on the upper river to extend from March 1 to May 31, 1995. The purpose is to protect the remaining rainbow population during its spawning season. The commission is considering limiting the spawning closure between McAtee Bridge and Ennis to March 1 through April 1, 1995. Public comment currently is being accepted on this issue.

The second regulation is a year-long closure on a reach of the Madison from Squaw Creek to Windy Point to study the impact of angler pressure. This closure will be reviewed at the end of the year to evaluate its efficacy.

Montana TU and the Madison-Gallatin TU Chapter supported the adoption of these emergency measures as prudent and reasonable. Individual TU members are urged to write to the commission (c/o MDFWP, 1420 East 6th Avenue, Helena, MT 59620) in support of these measures.

significant threat. The proliferation of poorly regulated private fish ponds and widespread illegal fish introductions compound difficulties in combating this and other fish maladies. Dealing with Whirling Disease will require a massive cooperative effort between the public and private sectors. The ultimate effects of the infection on

the future of Montana's trout fishing and native wild trout remain a major unknown. MDFWP also has initiated an on-line conference on its section of the state electronic bulletin boards to keep anglers abreast of the latest information. (See article on the state bulletin board for information on how to access this system, Page 3.)

## Montana Council Trout Unlimited Directory

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H: 538-2138

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#### Shaun Jeszenka, President

P.O. Box 7165  
Missoula, MT 59807

## Legislature

continued from page 1

environmental sentiment.

Among the bills still alive that he's carrying at our request are:

⊙ **HB 375**, which bans the transport of live fish in Montana, except for in the eastern fishing district. Thanks to Harper's hard work, the measure survived the House. It will help reduce illegal fish introductions and diseases. It has a good shot in the Senate.

⊙ **HB 464**, which authorizes the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks to inspect private ponds for disease and unwanted species. Deft work by Harper and TU lobbyist George Ochenski has produced a bill that can satisfy private property rights extremists, while also giving DFWP an angle to check ponds for problems like whirling disease. It has survived the House, but its fate in the Senate is uncertain.

⊙ **HB 192** should survive the House (it's in an appropriation committee). It authorizes the state to aid local watershed groups like those in the Clark Fork and Blackfoot drainages, and others being contemplated for the Big Hole and Bitterroot areas.

⊙ **HJ 24** is a resolution advocating establishment of a consensus group to explore ways to protect conservation values in stream corridors, while minimizing heartburn over private property rights.

⊙ **SB 144 (Brooke, D-Missoula and Beck, R-Deer Lodge)** implements a water management plan for the upper Clark Fork. Its prospects of passing are good. The plan, the result of a four-year negotiation process that involved Montana TU, establishes an in-stream flow leasing program for the drainage and closes the upper basin to new surface water rights. The plan's recommendation to close groundwater has been rejected in the Senate, but it could be revived in the House.

⊙ One of our major priorities to go down is **HB 348**, a bill sponsored by Harper to allow the Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission to set regulations for managing social impacts. Negotiated by sporting groups, fishing and floating outfitters, and DFWP, the bill died brutally at the hands of legislators reluctant to give more regulatory authority to the state.

⊙ And of course, there's the infamous **HB 349**, a controversial measure even inside TU. Sponsored by Rep. Bob Raney (D-Livingston), it directs DFWP to target more money to enhancement of habitat for wild and native fish. The funding would go to watershed restoration, stream projects, in-stream flow leasing and other activities that promote

better habitat and natural fish production on private and public land. The state council at its February 18 meeting endorsed the bill's concepts, but directed a subcommittee to fix language in the measure and explore with DFWP the budget ramifications of different funding formulas. The goal is to improve wild and native fish habitat and increase DFWP's budget efficiency, while not damaging other important programs.

Now about the bad news...

⊙ **SB 330**

(Chuck Swysgood, R-Dillon) and **SB 331** (Tom Beck) were written by mining industry lobbyists. They passed the Senate handily and

efforts must be focused to stop them in the House. The bills will eliminate all but a few waters in the state from protection under our nondegradation standard. The measures allow the current quality of most of Montana's best trout streams to be degraded with only perfunctory review, and they say only "affected property owners" can have any say in a decision to degrade. The measures also assure that waters we want to improve, such as the Clark Fork or upper Blackfoot, will stay degraded. The bills also weaken water quality standards, and they'll guarantee that increased nitrate and sewage pollution of drinking water, streams and lakes will occur from subdivisions. On top of that, the bills set drinking water standards for metals that dramatically increase cancer-risk. For example, the new standard for arsenic will go from the current one cancer-death-per-million to one per thousand. If every Montanan was then exposed to the legal limit for arsenic during their lifetime, 800 more would die of cancer in the state each year. Is that what you voted for? The new

standards were developed by the mining industry, approved by the state health department and okayed by the Senate. **Contact your House representative and Gov. Racicot today and tell them to oppose these bills!**

Among the other awful bills that have been transmitted are:

⊙ **HB 338 (Grimes, R-Clancy)**, which defines mining reclamation as leaving open pits with polluted water;

⊙ **HB 201 (Ellis, R-Red Lodge)**, which mandates a 40 percent increase in logging for state lands, deliberately ignoring protection for clean water and trout;

⊙ **SB 252 (Tveit, R-Fairview)**, which legalizes expansive pollu-



Top photo: about 30 Montana TU members 'Talked Trout' at the Legislature in February, bending legislators' ears. Montana TU founder Bud Lilly, left, in cap, presents a plaque to Gov. Marc Racicot on behalf of Montana's wild and native trout. The bull trout fiberglass replica for the plaque was painted by Wendy Decker, owner of Cata-mout Taxidermy in Hamilton.

tion zones in streams and ground-water bodies; and

⊙ **SB 231 (Mesaros, R-Cascade)**, which hamstring state environmental studies with radical requirements for private-property "takings."

By no means are these all the bad bills that are alive. The most effective way to curb the assault is for individual TU members to keep track of bills and contact your legislators, urging them to oppose bad bills. Thank them for good votes—and remember who voted for the bad ones.

To leave a message for your legislator, call 444-4800. Send faxes to: 1-900-225-1600. Call Racicot at 444-3111. Write them at Capitol Station, Helena, MT 59620.



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## Open letter to all Montana anglers from Bud Lilly:

Our lives, our livelihood, and our life's sport are all at risk. Montana's water quality is being attacked by a series of bills being pushed through our state Legislature.

The lives of all Montanans will be at risk if the lowering of water quality standards is permitted. Lowering water quality and reclassifying our streams to accept more pollutants will be devastating to our fisheries and our booming tourism industry, all of which depend on pristine rivers and lakes.

Sustainable development is absolutely necessary for maintaining a healthy, growing economy for all Montanans. Compromising Montana's water quality for the short-term gain of a few is not acceptable use of Montana's great natural resources.

Current legislation, if passed, will put 25 major Montana rivers at risk immediately, and all of our streams ultimately. We can't let our streams and rivers become a sewer system for Montana's future resource development.

I urge you to get in touch with your legislators and the governor to kill those bills which will put Montana's water at risk. The bills threatening Montana's waters are: SB 330, SB331, SB252, SB362, SB382; HB338. (See article, Page 1.)

*Yours for Montana's future,  
Bud Lilly*



## Application for Membership



**Yes!** I want to help protect Montana's trout and the waters they swim in. Please begin my one-year membership in Trout Unlimited at the rate I have checked below. I understand my dues payment entitles me to all regular membership benefits, including a TU decal, personal membership card, and quarterly issues of *TROUT* magazine and *Action Line* resource information.

### Please check membership category\*:

- Regular Membership - \$25
- Regular Membership - 3 years - \$65
- Family Membership - \$30
- Family Membership - 3 years \$75
- Sponsoring Contributor - \$50
- Century Contributor - \$100
- Conservator Membership - \$250
- Individual Life - \$500\*\*
- Family Life - \$600\*\*
- Senior/Student Membership - \$15
- Business Membership - \$100

### MAIL TO:

Trout Unlimited  
1500 Wilson Blvd., Suite 310  
Arlington, VA 22209-2310  
National TU's new toll-free number  
for membership services: 1-800-834-2419

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please include my name in the TU Grassroots Activist Network.

I want to help by making an additional contribution to Montana Trout Unlimited. Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_.

### • Payment Method •

Check       Charge

VISA/MasterCard # \_\_\_\_\_

Expir. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

(Required for Credit Card Payment)

Contributions over \$12 are tax deductible.

\* Canadian memberships - please add \$5 per year; all other countries, add \$20 per year.

\*\* No further dues.

• Make checks payable to Trout Unlimited. •

## Help TU & get LaFontaine's latest book

If you've read any recent fly fishing magazine, you probably know that *Trout Flies: Proven Patterns*, the latest book by the innovative and creative Gary LaFontaine, has received rave reviews from all over the country.

"If this were medicine," one reviewer stated, "this book would be the magic bullet for diseases." *Trout Flies: Proven Patterns* contains color photographs, descriptions, exceptionally clear and easy tying instructions, fishing advice and log entries for over 50 of LaFontaine's dry flies, emergers, nymphs, wet flies & streamers.

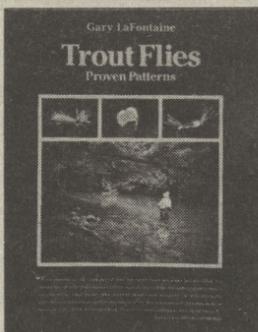
The patterns were selected after years of study by Gary and a host of his angler friends and field tested on Montana rivers and streams. The flies go way beyond the Royal Wulff and the Elk Hair Caddis, and include the Air Head, Emergent Sparkle Pupa, Were Wulff, etc.. Many are destined to become classic "tried and true" ones carried in every angler's fly boxes.

Even if you don't tie your own flies, the information and angling lore in this book make it worth owning.

Montana TU has made special arrangements with Greycliff Publishing, owned by Gary and Stan and Glenda Bradshaw, to offer a hard-cover copy of *Trout Flies: Proven Patterns* as a premium for a donation of \$75 to Montana TU.

So, to get a copy send a \$75 check to Montana TU, P.O. Box 262, Hamilton, MT 59840, and we will send you back a copy, postage paid.

There is no better way to treat cabin fever.



**W**hen you support Montana Trout Unlimited, you TIP THE TROUT! Montana artist Marlin Neaves designed this catchy mascot, and what better way to show you care than to wear a new Montana TU T-shirt? The familiar TU logo with the word MONTANA under it is over the left chest area and TIP THE TROUT graces the back. Also, available with only the TU logo on front. Preshrunk 9 oz., 100% cotton shirts are natural (light gray) color with turquoise logo and trout. Both long- and short-sleeved styles available. Long-sleeved are great for keeping sun off the arms. **So, order one; better yet, order several and help Montana TU protect our priceless fisheries! TIP THE TROUT!** (Includes shipping & handling.)

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