



One More Cast

Newsletter for the Truchas Chapter of Trout Unlimited
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Visit our website at:
<http://truchas-tu.org/>

Annual Banquet Saturday, April 10, 2010

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The Truchas Chapter of Trout Unlimited will hold its Annual Banquet Saturday, April 10th at the Inn and Spa at Loretto in Santa Fe. As always, it will begin with cocktails at 6:00 PM with dinner, fun and excitement to follow.

This year the Chapter is very excited to have Brian O'Keefe as its keynote speaker. A fly fisher from a very early age, Brian has traveled the world in search of good fish, and for the past twenty years, great photos. If you've seen cover photos on Field & Stream, Outdoor Life, Fly Fisherman, Fly, Rod and Reel, Fly Fishing Salt Waters, Fly and Fish Magazine, Outside Magazine and Men's Journal, then you've probably seen some of Brian O'Keefe's work. He is a master level certified fly casting instructor (FFF), dynamic speaker, and a tackle rep for Scientific Anglers in Washington, Oregon and Alaska.

Brian's magnificent photos will be on display as part of his presentation "My Favorite Fish" which shows some of the beautiful places around the world that he has traveled in search of great fishing. It will be exciting and fast paced, inspirational and enjoyable for both anglers and non-anglers.

In addition to the Grand Raffle (see sidebar), there will be exciting silent auction and live auction items including trips, gear and more. Banquet tickets are \$50 per person. For ticket information please call 505-231-0310.

Finally, the Chapter would love to see more kids at the Banquet this year. If you can think of anyone under 18 who likes fishing and competitive bidding, please bring them along.

Thanks in advance for your participation. See you at the Banquet!

Additional logistics: The Inn and Spa at Loretto is offering a preferred room rate. Rooms that retail for \$299/night are available for banquet guests for \$169/night while supplies last! Parking will be available for \$4.00/car the night of the event. Mention the Truchas Chapter Banquet to receive the discounted rate.



One More Cast
is published by the
Truchas Chapter
of Trout Unlimited.

**TU's Mission: To conserve, protect
and restore North America's cold-
water fisheries and their watersheds.**

Looking Back *and* Forward

Toner Mitchell, Chapter President

As our 2010 Annual Banquet approaches, it seems appropriate to reflect on the Chapter's successes, great and small, on several fronts. The Alamitos fish passage barrier is almost complete, representing the culmination of efforts of several TU chapters, TU National, New Mexico Trout, state and federal agencies, local irrigation groups, and private citizens. There have been a few bumps in the road, but soon, if you listen hard, you might hear a collective sigh of relief from some of the earth's precious few Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout living in Alamitos. The Truchas Chapter Youth Education Program (TCYEP), barely off the ground a year ago, has now exposed over 200 young students to the wonders of trout and the outdoors. TCYEP is currently managing several Trout in the Classroom (TIC) projects, with others ready to blast off this spring, and our involvement with the Pecos After School Program has been particularly rewarding (and fun) since it began in January.

Our 2009 fund raising Banquet was a surprising success in these tough economic times. To our donors and members, we'd like to express our deepest appreciation for your support of our efforts to protect the coldwater fisheries in our beautiful little corner of New Mexico; thanks to you, we've been able to keep our focus on the challenges before us.

In the coming year, we hope to build upon our progress. Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout will always be an important priority; cutthroat fisheries in the Jemez area and north state will demand our attention, as well as our cooperation with other trout advocacy groups. TCYEP hopes to have more TIC and after school projects operating by the end of 2010, and we'd like to start some kids' camps as well (please refer to John Wright's TCYEP update in this newsletter).

We are also looking forward to being riverkeepers of

the Windy Bridge section of the Pecos River, where we expect to make improvements in bank erosion and trout habitat. In fact, with the Alamitos wrapping up and TCYEP making steady progress, the Truchas Chapter will be turning the bulk of its focus to the Pecos Canyon, through which flows what many of us consider our home river. Through the years ahead, we will be collaborating with the Upper Pecos Watershed Association, resource management agencies, and other stakeholders to make gains in erosion control, pollution reduction, human use management, and other important criteria. Yes, I said years; it will take that long to cross off every item on our Pecos 'to do' list.

As far as this year is concerned, it will certainly be a challenge, albeit a welcome one, to meet all of our goals. You can help by donating your skills to our projects. If you can teach, tie flies, market products, write grants, build or design things (from structures to spreadsheets), then we need you. No matter what your abilities are, we can put them to use; for the record, we consider your love of trout and their ecosystems the most important qualification.

I'd like to reiterate how pleased we are with our progress against the threats to state's trout fisheries, and how grateful we are for your support.

Fingerlings get Released!

John Wright, Truchas Chapter Youth Education



Mud at Manzano Lake!

The first TIC students to release their fish were Mrs. Laura Wallin's 3rd grade class at Mountainview elementary in

Moriarty. They had a great time at their release event at Manzano Lake. Other Trout in the Classroom eggs

are now fingerlings and two more of our schools will be releasing them this spring. TCYEP, New Mexico Area Fisheries Managers, and the Lisboa hatchery have pulled together to make this happen for our kids.

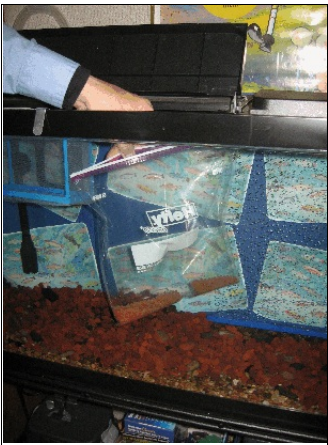


Checking water temperatures

Mr. Scott Larson is again raising trout with his 7th grade science classes in Eldorado.

And a new teacher to

our program, Mr. Andy Cordova, teaches an 8th grade science class at 21st Century charter school in Albuquerque. Check out Andy's Blog <http://cordovatROUT.blogspot.com/> Both Andy and Scott are fly fishers and will be releasing their



Tempering eggs

fingerlings in May into the Pecos. You can bet that both include fly fishing discussions with their students.



Kids and trout incubator

Attend your Banquet on April 10th to continue the success of Trout in the Classroom. TCYEP needs your support to continue buying equipment for our teachers. In addition, if we can raise enough money,

TCYEP will start a library program for our TIC sites.

[Ed. note: Starting a new TIC program costs about \$1200 for equipment and supplies per classroom. It's more expensive than a classroom guinea pig, but also much, much better at fostering an appreciation for our local ecology.]

2010 Grand Raffle Need not be present to win!

Money raised through our annual Grand Raffle represents a significant part of our Chapter budget. Even if you can't attend Banquet, you can help support your Chapter by participating in the Raffle.

Thanks to the generosity of several benefactors we are lucky and honored to offer these amazing prizes:

1st Prize: Vermejo Park Ranch.

2 days unguided fishing. Includes meals and 2 nights lodging for 2 people. Valid only Monday - Thursday, 8/1/10 - 9/14/10. Additional charges apply for additional guests, guide(s) and gift shop purchases. Retail value, \$2,200

2nd Prize: Soaring Eagle Lodge

2 nights lodging, all meals, 1 full day guided fishing including flies & gear. Valid for entire 2010 season. Retail value, \$895.

3rd Prize: Rocky Mountain Angling Club

1 year membership in RMAC which includes initiation fee and one year's dues. Following years dues to be paid by winner if desired. Retail value, \$455.

Tickets are \$5 each or 6 / \$25. If you received ticket books by mail, you may send in payment with the stubs. Tickets are also available at The Reel Life, High Desert Angler and at the Annual Banquet. Winners will be drawn at Banquet.

For additional information or tickets, call Jeff Croy at 505-995-8114.

**Alamitos Creek Project
Nears Completion**
Arnold Atkins

It's been several months since I've reported on our Alamitos Creek barrier project. When last I wrote, work had begun and it seemed we would have a finished project by Winter. However, a problem arose and work had to be suspended when about 70% complete. I am pleased to report that it appears that a solution has been found and we anticipate work will resume as soon as Springtime access can be gained. Our contractor is familiar with the terrain and is planning on completing the job before real runoff starts which will protect the interests of our acequia partners as well as our goal of preserving the genetic integrity of a sizeable population of Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout.

From the beginning, this project has been an exercise in cooperation and coordination of multiple partners and it has been a very worthwhile if sometimes frustrating experience for Truchas Chapter. It has also been an example of a number of things that make Trout Unlimited a great organization. While we as a chapter are focused on our local conservation issues, we have a national organization backing us up with experience and experts on multiple levels, and have access to grants and processes that help us avoid having to reinvent the wheel every time a need arises.

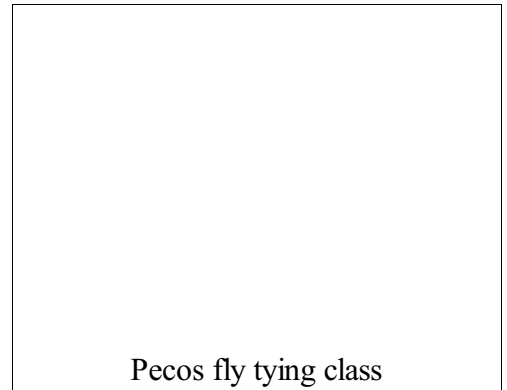
That said, we are still the ones that find and develop and physically work on the local projects, and we developed some insight while working on this one that will stand us in good stead for others in the developmental stage now, from Tio Grande Creek near San Antonio Mountain to the Pecos watershed in our own back yard. By the next newsletter I hope to have pictures of the finished project and I think it will be something of which we can all be proud.

"I love fishing. You put that line in the water and you don't know what's on the other end. Your imagination is under there." – *Robert Altman*

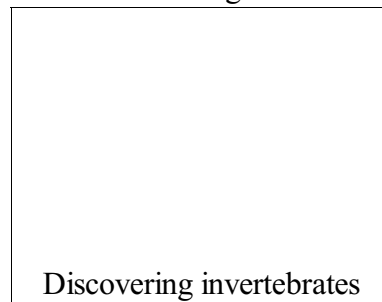
**TCYEP Teaches Spin Casting in
Pecos Independant School District**
John Wright

Since January, TCYEP has participated in the Pecos after-school program for middle school students (12yrs.-15yrs. old). Norm Maktima and John Wright assisted Ti Piper of NMDGF in an aquatic invertebrate study and a fly tying session. There were over 20 students and teachers that attended. Wow! The kids enjoyed themselves and became interested fishing.

Next, Toner Mitchell presented them with a great program on Trout Anatomy and Habitat.



TCYEP has scheduled a Fly Casting session with NMDGF presenting the students with information on junior license, where to fish, and basic fish conservation for the Pecos watershed. Other sessions will include a Monastery Lake "clean up", a field trip to the Pecos Historic National Park, and a presentation from The Wildlife Center on natural predators of trout. Then on April 21st, the students go on a Pecos fishing trip.



So, where does Spin Casting come in? Only a few of these students have ever held a rod or a pole. With only one casting lesson, will all the kids be able to

cast into Cowles pond and catch fish? The goal of TCYEP is to get our youth outdoors through fly fishing. Then keep them interested in fishing and the outdoors. On the students' fishing day, should TCYEP allow spin casting along with the fly fishing? Let me hear from you at our Annual Banquet or email me at jwwtwe@gmail.com before April 15th.

Proposed Regulation Changes

Frank Weissbarth

In January, the Game and Fish Department circulated and solicited comments on proposed changes to its Fisheries and Manner and Method Rules. The proposed changes to the Fisheries Rule would allow unlimited take of non-native brook, brown and rainbow trout in certain Special Trout Waters ("STWs") where native Rio Grande cutthroat and Gila trout are found. Non-native trout out-compete and interbreed with native Rio Grande cutthroat and Gila trout, and the rule is intended to protect the natives by removing competing fish from streams where both natives and non-natives are found. Game and Fish proposed the following changes:

- Changing the Special Trout Water ("STW") on the Rio Cebolla above Seven Springs Hatchery such that from Seven Springs Day Use Area to McKinney Pond is catch and release only and from McKinney Pond to the headwaters is catch and release only for Rio Grande cutthroat trout ("RGCT") and unlimited for brown, rainbow, and brook trout.
- Opening Capulin Creek to catch and release fishing.
- Creating a Special Trout Water (STW) on Cabresto Creek from Cabresto Canyon to the headwaters. The STW would allow unlimited take of brook, brown, and rainbow trout while protecting RGCT with a catch and release rule. Artificial flies and lures with barbless hooks would be required.
- Allowing unlimited take of brown, brook, and rainbow trout and catch and release only for RGCT on the Vermejo River system on Vermejo Park Ranch.
- Allowing unlimited take of rainbow, brown, and brook trout in Leandro Creek on the Valle Vidal while protecting RGCT with a catch and release rule, but with no tackle restrictions.
- Allowing unlimited take of rainbow, brown, and brook trout in Black Canyon in the Gila while protecting Gila with catch and release rule Proposal protects Gila while removing non-native trout. Tackle restrictions would remain.
- Game and Fish also proposed to change the Manner and Method Rule to ban the use of felt-soled waders, beginning on April 1, 2011.

Our Board reviewed the proposed new rules and submitted comments generally supporting the proposed changes, but with important qualifications designed to protect against unintended take of the native trout. In its comments, the Board pointed out that:

- It is essential that there be signs in place at the STWs that include clear and prominent pictures of the various trout species to show anglers which kinds of trout they can keep and which they must release.
- Signs by themselves are not enough. There must also be active enforcement by the Department.
- Tackle restrictions are important to protect against unintentional killing of the native trout that the regulations are designed to protect.

The Board also supported the proposal to amend the Manner and Method regulations to ban the use of felt soled waders and wading boots in public waters beginning April 1, 2011. Felt soled boots have been implicated in the spread of whirling disease, chytrid fungus, rock snot, New Zealand Mud Snails, and other aquatic invasive species. These species are problems for both native and non-native wildlife and cause economic harm. Alaska has banned felt-soled wading boots in the waters of southeast Alaska. New Zealand banned felt-soled wading boots after research showed a clear connection between felts and the spread of didymo. Other studies have implicated felts in the spread of New Zealand mudsnails. Eliminating the use of felt soled waders is a priority for TU both in New Mexico and across the nation.

The Board urged Game and Fish to engage in an education and outreach campaign to New Mexico anglers urging them to check, clean and dry their equipment before moving from one watershed to the next and not to move fish, fish parts, water and aquatic vegetation from one watershed to the next.

Although Game and Fish has withdrawn the proposed ban on the use of felt-soled waders, Truchas Chapter will continue to work to enact a ban. In the past 2 years, manufacturers have begun to produce a wide range of rubber soled wading shoes, including some with metal studs, that allow for safe and slip-free wading. As these wading shoes replace felt-soled waders, we expect that the resistance to banning felt-soled waders will decrease and that more and more states, including New Mexico, will ban their use.

Conservation Update

Dave Gratson

Alamitos : As Arnold has written, this project is still ongoing but we plan to complete the project in the next 6 weeks before spring runoff. This project has entailed multiple partners, including funding help from the New Mexico Trout, the Guadalupe River Chapter of TU and others, and we are really looking forward to announcing a completion later this year.

Tio Grande/ Tanques Barriers: These are old fish barriers that the RGCT Workgroup had identified as requiring replacement. The survey work for replacement was completed in 2009. We are fairly certain there will be funds this year, via the Western Native Trout Initiative, to replace the Tio Grande barrier. This is on Forest Service land and the work, including NEPA assessment, should be performed by the USFS.

Pecos: As reported in our November 2009 Newsletter the Chapter has become a River Keeper on the Pecos River from Windy Bridge up to the Fire Station. We are now investigating Chapter projects that we can develop for this River Keeper section. We have been in contact with the NM DOT, the Upper Pecos Watershed Association, and USFS as part of this effort. We are focusing on projects for improving water quality by reducing sediment load to the river. We would also like to include youth education in these projects by working with the Pecos Trout In the Classroom TCYEP program.

There are multiple volunteer opportunities, not only on the River Keeper section, but also with the US Forest Service, and the Upper Pecos Watershed Association. If you would like to volunteer to help the Chapter and these agencies and associations to inventory dispersed campsites, identify areas of the river that need bank stabilization, help with water quality monitoring, and other stream restoration projects please contact me at 471-5625 or the email provided on page 1.

Other Areas: Arnold Atkins attended the Jemez Mountains Restoration Strategy Workshop in

February. This is part of the collaborative forest restoration planning workshop for the SW Jemez Mountains. The purpose of this workshop was to define the ecological restoration objectives, treatments, and priority locations. The Chapter will continue to be an active participant in this process.

The Santa Clara Pueblo invited us to attend a meeting in February where they provided an update on their RGCT restoration efforts. They have made significant progress and currently have funding to construct fish barriers below the fourth pond. They anticipate treating the Santa Clara River, from the headwaters down to Pond 4 this summer and then to begin RGCT stocking once their fish surveys indicate non-native trout are no longer present.

Be a Hero—Volunteer!

Karen Denison

No, you won't be expected to wear a cape or spandex. But our Chapter runs on the efforts and ideas of our members. Our award-winning, nationally recognized Truchas Chapter needs you for ideas, tasks and projects large and small. You don't need to be an "expert", although your experience—whatever it is—may help us. One pressing need: **Newsletter Editor**.

Family obligations will require me to retire from being the *Last Cast* editor by Summer. If you have a computer, some minor facility with a word processing program (Word, WordPerfect, OpenOffice Writer, etc.) and a passing grasp of English, then you can do this task.

We are currently doing a quarterly publication. Board members and others do most of the writing, and editing consists of grammatical corrections, layout and email. This month's publication required about 3 hours to assemble, proofread and send.

Conceivably, even this small assignment could be handled as a "job-share" with two folks swapping off, or dividing tasks each issue. Won't you help keep information getting to our members?

Please contact me at ksdenison@attglobal.net or (505)983-5231 with any questions or to lend a hand.