

Volume 5, Issue 4

Fall 2016

aáy (pronounced "ahh-ee") is the Salish word for bull trout.

Our mission: To conserve, protect and restore valuable wild fish and their habitat in Northwest Montana



Your Vote Matters To Fish

November 8 is coming up fast. If you fish, hunt, hike, or otherwise make use of our great outdoor heritage in Montana it is critically important that you make your voice heard in the upcoming election.

It has been a divided and somewhat confusing campaign so far. It is understandable if you are baffled or maddened by the positions of candidates at the top of the ticket this year. But, that is

no excuse to stay home. Besides the major party national elections, this cycle will be extremely important for Montana sportsmen and women. If you refuse to vote because you are unhappy with this or that candidate, you are overlooking issues that will have an direct impact on our outdoor activities for years to come.

Public Lands: There have been proposals by several candidates to privatize our precious public lands in Montana and across the West or transfer lands to control of various state agencies. Make no mistake, once our public lands are removed from ownership by us all, we will never get them back and our access can be curtailed.

Stream Access: Montana has one of the most liberal stream access laws of any state. Every legislative session we see proposals that would reduce, or eliminate your access to our streams. The upcoming 2017 session will be no different. Montana Code, section 23-2-302 declares that "all surface waters that are capable of recreational use may be so used by the public without regard to the ownership of the land underlying the water." Make no mistake, there will be another concerted attack on your rights to access our public waters this coming year and it will take the support of the folks you elect to the legislature to prevent the loss of

Vote: continued on page 4

Officers

- President..... Larry Timchak
- Vice President..... Vacant
- Secretary..... Dylan Boyle
- Treasurer..... Chris Schustrom
- Banquet Chair..... Dan Short
- Conservation Chair... Lucky Sultz
- Veterans Chair..... Jim Borowski



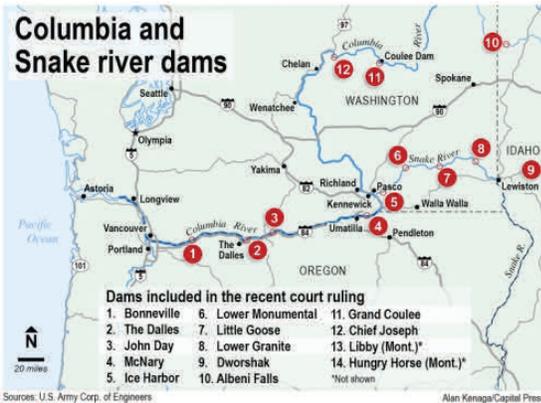
www.warriorsandquietwaters.org

"Fish are, of course, indispensable to the angler. They give him an excuse for fishing and justify the fly rod without which he would be a mere vagrant."

~ Sparse Grey Hackle

aáy is a quarterly publication of the Flathead Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

Contact: 406-250-7473, flatheadtu@gmail.com, www.flatheadtu.org



Your chance to have a say in operations of Columbia River system dams

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bonneville Power Administration are providing an opportunity for anyone who is interested to help the agencies identify issues and concerns that could be analyzed in an upcoming Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the operation and configuration of the 14 dams in the Columbia River Basin.

This is your opportunity to let the agencies know what you think the priorities should be for the future of these dams.

Included in the scoping process will be operations of both Libby and Hungry Horse dams in Montana as well as the dams on the Snake River and the mainstem Columbia River.

The agencies will hold 15 public meetings throughout the northwest, including three meetings in Montana;

- Tuesday, November 1, 2016, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Red Lion Hotel Kalispell, 20 North Main St., Kalispell, Montana.
- Wednesday, November 2, 2016, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., City of Libby City Hall, 952 E. Spruce St., Libby, Montana.
- Thursday, November 3, 2016, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Hilton Garden Inn Missoula, 3720 N. Reserve St., Missoula, Montana.

We encourage all of our members and friends to attend one, or more, of the upcoming meetings and to submit pertinent comments on dam operations.

Of course one of the biggest discussions in the scoping process will involve the breaching or removal of the four federal dams on the Snake River. Earlier this year Oregon federal judge Michael Simon ruled that the latest Biological Opinion (biop) for saving endangered Columbia River salmon populations violates the federal Endangered Species Act and additionally the National Environmental Policy Act. That action brought removal of the dams into the conversation.

A good article on Sept. 30 in the Spokesman Review outlines the revived proposal to breach the Snake River dams. <https://goo.gl/pXN0vu>

Judge “Simon said federal agencies had “done their utmost” to avoid considering breaching the Snake River dams, ignoring strong suggestions to do so by a previous federal judge.

While Simon said he wouldn’t dictate what options agencies should consider, he said a proper analysis under federal law “may well require” considering breaching, bypassing or removing one or more of the four Lower

Dams, continued on page 4

Newsletter content does not necessarily reflect the views of Flathead Valley Trout Unlimited, it’s membership or Montana Trout Unlimited.

FVTU welcomes submission of photos or content from our valued members. The newsletter is published quarterly throughout the year. Publication dates will be approximately Jan. 1, Apr. 1, July 1, and Oct. 1. Please send contributions at least ten days prior to publication to the newsletter editor at:

lucky@flatheadtu.org

is also available online at the FVTU website. www.flatheadtu.org

Newsletter editor: Lucky Sultz





Casting For Recovery Glacier Country Breast Cancer Retreat

In September, members of Flathead Valley Trout Unlimited were fortunate to be able to help out with the *Casting For Recovery* retreat on the Middle Fork of the Flathead River. We became “river helpers” for a day for fourteen wonderful breast cancer survivors and a had great day of fly fishing and instruction on the Middle Fork.



“The concept of Casting for Recovery is unique. On a physical level, the gentle, rhythmic motion of fly casting is similar to exercises often prescribed after surgery or radiation to promote soft tissue stretching.

On an emotional level, women are given the opportunity to experience a new activity in a safe environment amongst a supportive group of peers. The retreats provide resources to help address quality of life issues after a breast cancer diagnosis, and a new outlet – fly fishing – as a reprieve from the every day stresses and chal-

lenges of their cancer. “

“The mission of Casting for Recovery is to enhance the quality of life of women with breast cancer through a unique program that combines breast cancer education and peer support with the therapeutic sport of fly fishing.”

The fishing, as they say, was awesome, but the “catching” turned out to be somewhat disappointing. Overall, the weather cooperated and we had a great day on the river. I think volunteers and participants alike really enjoyed their time on the river. A lot of learning took place on both sides, friends were made and hopefully we saw some new converts to the “healing” art of fly fishing. Thanks to Glacier Country CFR for allowing us to participate in this great program!



To learn more, or apply to join a retreat, visit the CFR website: <https://castingforrecovery.org/breast-cancer-retreats/glacier-country-montana/>

Flathead Valley Trout Unlimited holds monthly meetings on the third Tuesday of each month October through April. Meetings are held at the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks conference room at 490 N. Meridian in Kalispell beginning at 7pm. Please join us for our regular meetings and program offerings.



FVTU Calendar

- October 18, 2016—Brian Summers from MT FWP will speak about the investigation and prosecution of the South Fork Flathead case in which the owners and an associate of an outdoor film Company, Montana Wild, were issued 38 state citations and 11 federal citations, resulting in \$5,950 in fines.
- November 14, 2016—FVTU will host a presentation by Dr. Clint Muhlfeld on “Trout in Hot Water—Conserving Rocky Mountain Trout in the Face of Climate Change”
- December 20, 2016—FVTU will host our annual Gala Christmas Social and Fly Tying Extravaganza. Watch for more information on our website.

Vote, from page 1 this public treasure.

Climate Change: The issue of our changing climate is settled science. No one knows this with more certainty than those of us who spend time pursuing our passions outdoors. The warming of our waters and changes in streamflows strongly affect how and when we can use our streams. Fish kills due to the effects of a warming climate are becoming more common and invasive species that thrive in changing waterways are direct threats to our native species and our fishing heritage. This is a problem that we can no longer afford to ignore and those we elect must be held accountable for their stance on climate change.

Renewable Energy: Our energy future is changing. For many differing reasons, Montana’s extractive industries are in decline. We must encourage our legislators to move past the old paradigm of polluting industries and find new ways to provide for a clean energy future. We can’t afford to keep subsidizing technologies of the past at the expense of the future of our children.

So, even if you dislike the choices you have for top-tier candidates, or can’t make up your mind which way to go. It is incumbent on each of us to study the platforms and statements of all the candidates and select those who will do their utmost to protect the outdoor legacy and traditions that we all enjoy in Montana. **Vote November 8!**

Dams from page 2 Snake River dams.

Salmon advocates said the ruling is the closest the region has come to dam breaching since 2000, when the Army Corps of Engineers did a study of taking out the Lower Snake dams.”

Conservation and fishing groups have been particularly vociferous in advocating for removal of the Snake River dams and have held flotillas on the river to support removal.



You can find out more about the scoping process and how you can be involved by visiting the *Columbia River System Operations* website at; <http://www.crso.info/>

Sulphur Biot Nymph

Tied by Bill Dell



Hook: Nymph 1x Long, #14
Thread: Yellow 8/0 Uni-Thread
Body: Brown Goose Biot
Thorax: Blend of Yellow, Orange and Tan Dubbing
Tail: Indian Hen Feather Fibers

Legs: Indian Hen Feather Fibers
Wingcase: Brown Swiss Straw
Note: Add a gold bead to fish on the bottom before a sulphur hatch begins, no bead to fish farther up in the water column during the hatch.

From: <http://www.tu.org/go-fishing/fly-patterns>

No Smith River Mine!
SaveOurSmith.com
© 2014 Save Our Smith. All Rights Reserved



The following column was written by Roger Smith, board member for the Flathead Lakers and former economist who lives on Flathead Lake. The column was published in the Missoulian on 9/27/2016.

<https://goo.gl/7Nh9Mn>



Oil Trains Threaten Flathead Waters

Rail transport of crude oil has risen at a staggering rate. In 2010, 453,000 barrels traveled by rail from the Rocky Mountain and Midwest regions to the West Coast; by 2014, it was 57 million barrels – 125 times higher. A large amount of this oil moved along rail lines crossing Montana, much of it by BNSF along the Middle Fork of the Flathead River.

Transporting crude oil by rail puts clean water, and all that depends on it, at risk. Rail operators insist that serious accidents are exceptionally rare, but since 2013 there have been 30 accidents involving trains carrying crude oil resulting in deaths, fires, and polluted waters and soils along numerous rivers and streams.

An oil tank car holds about 700 barrels of crude oil – 30,000 gallons. Fifty-seven million barrels in 2014 means over 81,000 crude oil tank-car loads (versus 647 in 2010) crossing the Rocky Mountain region, much moving along the rail and highway corridor separating Glacier National Park from the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. A major oil spill threatens the integrity of these national treasures as well as extensive downstream watersheds that support Flathead valley and beyond.

Only the naïve would expect regulations developed by federal and state officials, working with oil, rail and tank car industries, to have developed the necessary safety measures. Billions spent on lobbyists have a significant impact on development of industry regulations. Citizen groups seldom offset such money and power. At \$10/

barrel, 57 million barrels translates to \$570 million in annual revenues arising from crude oil transport by rail through the Rocky Mountains to the West Coast. Claims by industry that they are doing what government regulators require are hardly reassuring.

So what’s needed along the Middle Fork of the Flathead River to protect against punctured oil tank cars ending up in the river? BNSF has taken some steps to improve safety, but we can, and must, demand further specific actions to protect against a significant disaster to the clean water that is “priceless” to Montanans. Such action includes, but is not limited to, improving tank car standards that better ensure against puncture and leakage; retiring tank cars that do not meet the highest safety standard (this applied to 80 percent of tank cars in North America in 2014); extending snow sheds to all areas with an avalanche risk; further reducing the number of tank cars in a crude oil train; more strictly limiting train speed; and increasing the frequency of rail inspections. Industry, federal and state governments must provide adequate resources (seldom done) to ensure safety protocols are followed and regulations enforced.

Furthermore, a scientifically planned dye test along the Middle Fork would provide information on the anticipated dispersion of an oil spill and facilitate training and preparation that enables adequate response to an accident in any season. Much is at stake. Costs are considerable, but commensurate to the risk. Action is essential. Leaving it to the hard work of environmental groups to protect our natural environment will never be enough. The largely unnoticed increase in oil transport by rail has imminent threats if left unchecked.

Disturb the silence. Make your voice heard. Share your concerns about the threat of oil spills with U.S. Sens. Steve Daines and Jon Tester, U.S. Rep. Ryan Zinke, Gov. Steve Bullock and your state representatives. Provide support to groups working on your behalf – the National Parks Conservation Association, Headwaters Montana, Trout Unlimited, American Rivers, the Flathead Lakers and others who work to protect clean waters.



Swan Lake Update



The following is a brief update from MFWP fisheries biologist Leo Rosenthal on the 2016 lake trout netting effort on Swan Lake.

“Similar to the past eight years of this project, everything went off without a hitch. This is undoubtedly due to the professionalism of our contractors, the dedication of our volunteers, and the tireless commitment of all the agency staff involved. We finished the season with over 6,400 juvenile lake trout being removed from the system. This represents a slight increase from last year, but very similar to the previous few years. Bull trout bycatch was down considerably this year, and this decrease represents a continued trend for subadult bull trout in Swan Lake. This declining trend in bycatch is concerning and will continue to be investigated. Meanwhile, the year isn’t over yet, and we still have another three weeks of adult netting to do in October. If you haven’t had the chance to go out in the fall, let me know and we will make sure to get you out there. Thanks again for another great year.”

**2016 FALL MACK DAYS
LAKE TROUT FISHING EVENT/DERBY
ON FLATHEAD LAKE IS NOW UNDERWAY**



Sponsored by the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes and sanctioned by Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

Up to \$150,000 in Cash and Prizes
One \$10,000 & Three \$5,000 Prizes; Five \$1000 Prizes
and Over Six Thousand \$500 to \$100 Tagged Lake Trout
September 23rd to November 13th

The 2016 event removed 2,099 lake trout through the first weekend. Overall, more than 385,000 lake trout have been removed through the 29 previous events.

New notice for this year:

Please Avoid Trap Nets

The Fisheries Program has placed two trap nets in the Narrows area to assist in our lake trout harvest program. The nets allow us to target lake trout and to release other species unharmed. Each trap is marked with several white surface buoys and several orange staff buoys. PLEASE AVOID THESE AREAS. The traps will be in place potentially until late November. Thank you for your cooperation, and call Cindy at 270-3386 or Barry at 396-2836 if you have any questions.



Tintina resubmits Smith River mine application

Following rejection of their first permit application due to many deficiencies, Tintina Resources Inc., the Australian company that wants to build a massive copper mine in the headwaters of the Smith River, has resubmitted their application. In response to a 60-page deficiency notice from Montana DEQ, the company believes the paperwork is now more comprehensive.

“There were a number of things that DEQ didn’t point out that we think were deficient,” said Bruce Farling, the executive director of Montana Trout Unlimited. The additional is-

sues included missing data on groundwater, surface water and the way the company plans to dispose of its tailings.”

See the article in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle.

<https://goo.gl/5FrJCF>

Bull trout lawsuit targets Idaho forest roads

“An environmental group has filed a lawsuit contending two federal agencies are violating the Endangered Species Act by failing to analyze how roads and motorized trails could be harming threatened bull trout in

the Payette National Forest in west-central Idaho.

The federal lawsuit filed by WildEarth Guardians in Idaho on Wednesday seeks to force the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to complete an analysis that could result in restrictions on roads and motorized trails.

“We really need to reduce as many stressors as possible to give (bull trout) a chance to recover,” said John Mellgren, an attorney with Western Environmental Law Center representing the environmental group. “At this point we’re really talking about the survival of bull trout.”

<https://goo.gl/UG1HYo>