



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I like ribs and chicken hot & smoky, not the skies of NW Montana. I sincerely hope all of you are staying safe and acting appropriately as our Air Quality Index bounces around from unhealthy to unhealthy for sensitive groups. Hey! I'm a sensitive kind of guy. Should I stay inside?

Unlike many national conservation organizations, Trout Unlimited is truly committed to supporting the grass roots. We are the wading shoes on the ground locally. We know the issues affecting our local waters and what needs to be done. The bottom-up organizational structure of Trout Unlimited allows the 14 local chapters in the state set their own priorities, control their own assets and develop their own programs to address the local issues. We all know that our local issues don't exist in a vacuum and that is where Montana Trout Unlimited fits in. MTU has the resources and the staff to deal with the statewide issues by covering the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and the legislature among other things. Not all TU chapters have the same issues and concerns. The State Council walks that line between supporting our unique local issues but speaking with a cohesive statewide voice which allows us to punch above our weight at the legislature and with the FWP commission. For example, many of you subscribed to the legislative updates from MTU Conservation Director Clayton Elliott. His invaluable and timely observations during the legislative session allowed the grassroots TU members to have their voices heard in Helena. This is just one small but important example of the support that MTU provides. I would like more chapter members to understand the relationship between our chapter and the state council and attending this meeting is a great way to do this.

I'll see you in September! - The 25th, that is.

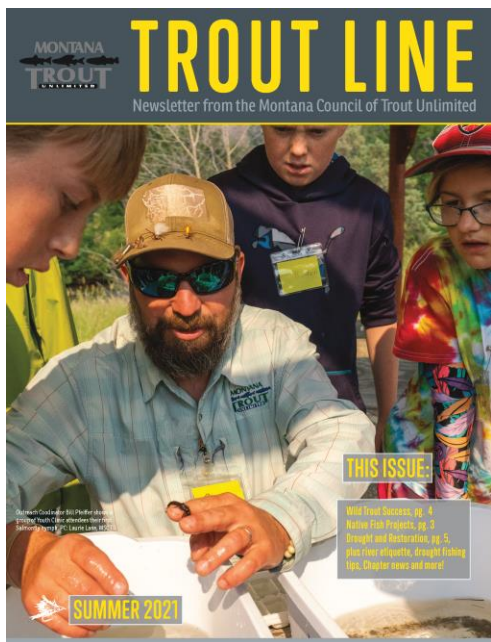
Dan Short

President, Flathead Valley Trout Unlimited



On Saturday, August 14, Flathead Valley Trout Unlimited partnered with the Underwater Soldiers to participate in the 2021 Flathead Waters Cleanup event sponsored by the Flathead Basin Commission and the Flathead County Conservation District. The Underwater Soldiers uses diving as a way to provide community and therapy for veterans of the armed forces. Trout Unlimited actively seeks to partner with veterans' organizations such as the Underwater Soldiers as part of the Veterans Service

Partnership. As a result of this event with the Underwater Soldiers, we collected about 55lbs of trash and 1 very confused crawdad at the Swan Lake boat ramp.



The [Summer Edition of the MTU Newsletter “Trout Line”](#) is now available. Find out what our chapters and the state office have been up to. Review the 2020 MTU Annual Report, learn how to better inspect your watercraft, how to fish responsibly during the drought and low-water conditions we are seeing, and learn what you can do to help our unequalled fisheries during these trying times.

We are normally not big fans of being inside on a Saturday but we want everyone to be aware of the upcoming Montana Trout Unlimited State Council meeting on Saturday, September 25. Your Flathead chapter will be the host chapter for the meeting which will be held at the Glacier Outdoor Center in West Glacier. MTU staff and chapter leaders from around the state will spend the day talking about TU business, trout habitat and conservation. This is a great chance to meet the staff of Montana TU and learn more about the state organization.

TWO MORE IMPORTANT DATES COMING UP

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) is seeking public input on a proposal to purchase 772 acres of forestland along the Flathead River near Columbia Falls in an effort to ensure public access and protect critical fish and wildlife habitat.

FVTU has partnered with the Flathead Land Trust by providing mini-grant money to help with the purchase of this important parcel on the Flathead River. This land provides important habitat for bull trout and westslope cutthroats as well as deer, elk and many species of wildlife. It is much too important to allow it to fall prey to developers.

Please let FWP know that you support this purchase. Email your comments to ktempel@mt.gov by 5pm Sept. 8. Or, send a hard copy to:

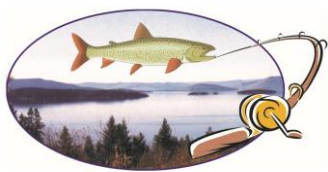
Kris Tempel
 Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
 490 North Meridian Road
 Kalispell, MT 59901

Montana FWP is considering some off-cycle changes to the fishing regulations for 2022 and they are calling for public comment.

Every fourth year FWP seeks input from the angling public and department staff about ideas and concerns that might be addressed through regulations changes. A comprehensive review of the fishing regulations was completed for the 2020 regulations, with the next review set to occur for 2024. Regulation changes for 2022 are considered “off-cycle” and meet one of five criteria outlined below. Except for emergency or time-sensitive changes, the regulations adopted by the commission go into effect the following March and printed in the Fishing Regulation booklet for that year.

To review and comment on the proposed changes for 2022, you can send comments to FWPFishComments@mt.gov or go to the [FWP Public Comment page](#) by Sept. 26th.

FALL MACK DAYS



Get ready! Fall Mack Days 2021 runs Sept. 16th through Nov. 14th. Up to \$200,000 in cash and prizes will be available to lake trout anglers on Flathead Lake. Mack Days Fishing Events are used by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes as a management tool for native fish conservation in Flathead Lake by reducing the population of non-native lake trout as a means to increase the native populations of bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout in Flathead Lake. Efforts to increase native fish numbers require an indefinite commitment because their populations in Flathead Lake have declined, bull trout are listed under the Endangered Species Act as a threatened species and westslope cutthroat trout are listed as a species of special concern.

Entry is free. You can sign up and get more information at [MackDays.com](https://www.mackdays.com).

A BIG MESS IN TRESTLE CREEK

Trestle Creek in Northern Idaho is the most important bull trout spawning stream for Lake Pend Oreille. [Earlier this summer](#), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decided to rescind approval for a luxury marina and five large houses on Trestle Creek due to dangers to protected trout populations.

“This project threatens one of Idaho’s most sensitive and precious freshwater fish species,” said Kristine Akland, a staff attorney at the Center for Biological Diversity. “We’re pleased that the Service has recognized that the agencies have a duty to ensure bull trout and their critical habitat in Trestle Creek aren’t unduly harmed.”

Bull trout populations in Trestle Creek have drastically declined in recent years in concert with most populations of the protected fish. “A short 10-15 years ago, Trestle Creek was responsible for nearly 50 percent of the bull trout production in Lake Pend Oreille,” said Idaho Fish and Game Staff Biologist Ken Bouwens. The agency took note of the declines and designed a program to improve bull trout habitat in Trestle Creek.



Taking advantage of collaborative partnership among Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Avista, Bonner County and Federal Highways Administration, IDFG designed [a project to help young bull trout survive their growing years](#). Young fish require places to hide from predators and feed, such as small side-channels. Much of that had gone missing in Trestle Creek. Using their combined knowledge of habitat, the agencies made a mess of Trestle Creek. But what may look to the human eye like a natural disaster, young trout see as a place to escape predators and grow large enough to later survive in the lake’s vast expanse of open water. And as all anglers know, there can be no big trout without little trout first.

“I know it looks like a mess, but it’s a strategic mess,” Bouwens said. “From a fish’s perspective, messy is good”. Only time will tell how much these projects will benefit native trout in Lake Pend Oreille, but the Trestle Creek projects are off to a promising start.

JUST A QUICK NOTE: *From IDFG*, The Clark Fork River between Cabinet Gorge Dam and Lake Pend Oreille will be experiencing low flow conditions for a short period of time on Sep. 9.

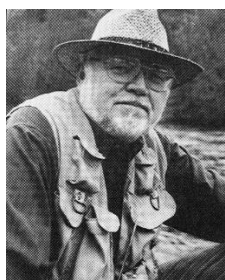
Avista is building a new fish passage facility at Cabinet Gorge Dam. As part of the project, releases of water through the dam are being reduced to zero for a short period of time to facilitate construction on the project.

Anglers don't panic! Although flows will be at zero, this is not the first time this has happened. Initial phases of construction on the project in 2019 required zero flow conditions for longer periods of time. Avista and Fish and Game staff closely monitored the event and found impacts to fish and fishing to be minimal. The river will not run dry, as the tributaries and groundwater coming into the river keep the water flowing, just at lower water levels.

For full details and for daily flow updates from Avista: <https://www.myavista.com/.../celeb.../water-flow-information>

Quinnett's Quips

Therapeutic Silence



“It is not just okay to be alone, but essential. When alone, new possibilities present themselves. Jesus was alone in the desert for 40 days. Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud sequestered themselves for days on end thinking things up and through. Albert Einstein walked alone, pondering the Big Ones – the origin of the universe, the relationship of mass to energy, the possibilities of light and relativity, and why Walleyes sometimes strike short. We know from research that if their personal space is violated, people get anxious, irritable and increasingly aggressive; which is why you don’t want to move in too close to the guy catching all the fish next to you. Proper social distancing varies from culture to culture, but Americans need more than most. Men need more space than women and, unless I miss my guess, a Western trout fisherman needs more than just about anybody.”

oàý is the Salish word for bull trout. This newsletter is a quarterly publication of Flathead Valley TU and does not necessarily reflect the views, agenda or policy of Trout Unlimited.