



# One More Cast

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

## State of the Chapter

Toner Mitchell, Truchas Chapter President

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Lots going on in the aftermath of our Banquet, not a moment of rest. This is a good thing, for there are plenty of areas where the Chapter's focus has and will continue to have a positive impact. TCYEP keeps humming along, with John and his group in hot pursuit of new Trout in the Classroom teachers and funding for projects to begin in the Fall 2009 school year. Our Pecos work proceeds apace, beginning with Bob O'Connor's efforts to install signage connoting the Chapter's guardianship of the Windy Bridge to Brush Ranch stretch of the river. Also on the Pecos, the Truchas Chapter will be partnering with the Upper Pecos Watershed Association (UPWA), the Department of Game and Fish, and the Forest Service on projects ranging from trout ecology and water quality education in the Pecos Schools and generally improving the way people tread on the riparian area and its wild inhabitants. We've also gotten involved with the San Juan Working Group, a body that includes a broad range of stakeholders in the viability of the San Juan fishery. Bill Schudlich, as always, has his finger on the pulse of issues related to the Valles Caldera. The chances for substantial progress on all of these fronts appear good.

As far as on the ground activities are concerned, the spring Pecos cleanup hosted by Doug Jeffords, Pancho Adelo, and George Romero of UPWA was a great success as always, if only for the outrageously good barbeque served at the picnic. Seriously though, a lot of garbage was stuffed into bags that day thanks to UPWA's efforts and those of our friends at Youthworks, the Department of Game and Fish, and the U.S. Forest Service. Doug Jeffords will provide more details in his article in this newsletter, but from my perspective this cleanup will always be a great way for our membership to strengthen its bond with our home river and its other stewards. One thing we'd like to see more of next time is greater attendance by our membership, and hopefully lots of young folks.

Speaking of youngsters, the Santa Fe River Festival gave us a chance to



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**TU's Mission: To conserve, protect  
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connect with at least 70 young trout anglers, many of whom may become fly fishers as a result of the Chapter's teaching of fly tying (Arnold Atkins), entomology (John Wright), and fly casting (yours truly). Karen Denison, Bob O'Connor, and Bill Schudlich gave us invaluable support. As with the Pecos cleanup, this was a great event for strengthening our relationships with our community of coldwater stewards.

In my brief time on the Truchas Chapter board, I have not experienced the momentum we currently have. Promise lies on every horizon for real and hopefully permanent change in our fisheries thanks to the tireless efforts of our active members. I've said it before, but all we really need is more boots on the ground. If we had just three more person/hours at the Santa Fe River Festival, we might have signed up a few more members who might someday put in some hours, or sign up a few more members to put in some hours. You get my point. It's easy to put in some time. It's also fun, and the rewards are immeasurable. Let's all get involved. In a year that saw the Chapter significantly expand its conservation and restoration mission, we know we could not even begin to do what we do without your continued and generous support. Thank you!

### **Join the Pecos Riverkeeper Program**

Bob O'Connor

Truchas Chapter announces the start of an exciting new initiative called the Pecos River Keeper Program in association with The Upper Pecos Watershed Association (UPWA).

The Chapter and UPWA want enlist to the support of TU members and local residents of Santa Fe and

Pecos to help the Chapter adopt a portion of the public waters on the Pecos River and to "lead by example," showing our respect for the Pecos by maintaining its natural beauty and ecology 365 days a year. Signs are planned to mark our adopted section as a beginning step in the program. Special "Pecos River Keeper" ball caps will soon be available to acknowledge your support and participation. Like our very successful RGCT Restoration Fund merchandising, all proceeds from the purchase of these distinctive Pecos River Keeper caps will go toward funding our River Keeper conservation efforts.

**Year Round Water for the Santa Fe River**  
Bill Schudlich  
(reprinted from the New Mexico TU blog)

At the June 7th Santa Fe River Festival, Mayor David Coss and County Commissioner Harry Montoya jointly announced that the parties have come to an agreement that when the Buckman Diversion comes on line in 2011, the county will donate water to the Santa Fe River.

The diversion is expected to provide the county with 2,000 acre feet per year. With expected demand, the county believes that it can donate 1,000 excess acre feet per year to the river on a temporary basis. Maybe for as long as 10 to 20 years.

While not a permanent solution, at least this is a start to building returning a real recreational fishery to the river. 1,000 acre feet should provide a base flow to the river in times when the city and the water utility have let the river run dry.

**Youth Education Program:  
Success Begets Success, and More Opportunity**  
Arnold Atkins

Since our official "kickoff" at the Banquet, our youth program (TCYEP) has been successfully involved in several events, has received multiple inquiries about our Trout in the Classroom program (we may actually have to form a waiting list this year), and has strengthened our relationship with our partners in the youth conservation education arena. This means that there is both a need and an opportunity for member participation on multiple levels, ranging from an occasional hour or two actually working with kids, to a designated contribution to help fund our projects, to just signing up a child of your choice for a TU youth membership.

Shortly after the March Banquet, we were invited to present an introduction to fly tying and fly casting at the New Mexico School for the Deaf. We met with 15-20 students on two evenings in May, and it was as rewarding and instructional for us as it was for the students. It went very well, and we look forward to having a Trout in the Classroom (TIC) project there.



School for the Deaf

Later in May, we set up shop at the Pecos Cleanup, and gave some entomology, fly tying, and fly casting to some kids who liked it a lot. While this event was not as well attended as we would have liked, it was a great warmup for our show at the Santa Fe River Festival the following week. Thanks to our partner NMDGF (who put our booth on their list of required places to visit to be eligible for a rod raffle) about 75

children (plus their parents) received our instruction and introduction to conservation. Quite a few kids and adults seemed genuinely



Arnold tying flies at the Santa Fe River Festival

interested in our programs. Toner, John Wright, and I worked and talked non-stop for about 5 hours, and it was great! We had some welcome assistance from Karen Denison, Bill Schudlich and Bob O'Connor. Rudy Rios participated on behalf of New Mexico Trout, as well. We could have used 3 more adult participants--we'll know better next time.

TCYEP promises to be a great opportunity to increase the ranks of committed cold water conservationists. We definitely need more help with this program, and it doesn't need to be board or even committee membership, but rather just a willingness to help teach our next generation of outdoors enthusiasts what it's all about. Please contact any of us, but especially youth chairman John Wright, for more information on this great opportunity to make a difference!



Toner with a new fly caster at the SF River Festival

## **Chapter Membership Drive is On Added Value for Members**

Bob O'Connor

The Truchas Chapter is about to embark on a new membership initiative and new members' drive to encourage friends and family to join Trout Unlimited and actively participate with Truchas Chapter in all the Chapter's conservation, youth education and environmental advocacy programs.

Past President and past Banquet Chairman, Bob O'Connor, has been appointed by the Board to spearhead the new membership initiative. Bob has decided to focus on four areas of interest – 1) Member Fishing Trips with Special Seminars; 2) Adult-Child Fishing Experiences; 3) Boots-on-the-Ground Conservation Activities; and 4) Continuing Education Programs with The Reel Life and High Desert Angler.

The goal is to broaden the range of activities and experiences in which you as members of Trout Unlimited can become involved with Truchas Chapter and to provide activities for you to introduce your family members, friends and associates to the activities of Trout Unlimited in New Mexico.

Bob met with Larry Johnson of The Soaring Eagle Lodge and talked with Bo Prieskorn of Brazos River Ranch. Both have agreed to participate in offering weekend trip packages for Truchas Chapter members and their guests. In addition, Corkins Lodge has expressed interest in offering a weekend trip package for members at their lodge on the Brazos. Bob is hoping to initiate a discussion with the historic Cimarroncita Ranch to provide a fantastic father/son/mother/daughter guided fishing weekend. Each trip will be designed to offer seminars or other presentations from local experts to make the weekend about more than just great fishing. An update on the

status of the San Juan fishery, a discussion about fly tying and the entomology of the Brazos are just a couple of examples of things to come.

We will certainly try and restage the very successful Pike Clinics later in the season. We are also going to encourage members to participate in our Rio Grande Cutthroat Restoration Fund projects – Alamitos Creek, Comanche Creek, the upcoming barrier projects on the Tio Grande and Tanques Creeks near San Antonio Mountain, our River Keeper initiative on the Pecos and our AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) efforts.

Finally, in conjunction with our fly shop partners High Desert Angler and The Reel Life, the Chapter hopes to offer a series of special events once each quarter – fly tying clinics, a fly fishing film festival, guest speakers, and Norm Maktima's Czech Nymphing clinic to name a few suggestions – to fill out the calendar year.

Details and future announcements will appear in the ONE LAST CAST newsletter and will be sent out by email. Feel free to contact Bob O'Connor at (505) 603-0797 or [Roboconnor@aol.com](mailto:Roboconnor@aol.com) for more information.

## **News from UPWA** Doug Jeffords, President

### **Upper Pecos Watershed Association begins first Pecos Restoration Project**

The Upper Pecos Watershed Association (UPWA) has officially started its \$325,000, two-year "Hatchistry" restoration project on the Pecos River. This "On the Ground" project is funded by a River Ecosystem Restoration Initiative (RERI) Grant awarded last September by the New Mexico Environment

Department. The project involves work on property belonging to NM DG&F, the Pecos Benedictine Monastery, and a private landowner.

The project aim is to mitigate the two EPA Clean Water Act “TMDL” criteria -- temperature and turbidity-- for which this section of the river is listed, thus removing it from “Impaired” status. It will also provide better in-stream flow in both high and low water conditions, purer water downstream from the project, and ensure proper flow to the acequia which feeds Monastery Lake.

Work to be performed includes removal of the existing gabion weir/dam structure in the west channel of the river immediately below the Hatchery, installation of more ecologically sound pool regulating structures in that channel, moving the supply point for the Monastery acequia upstream to prevent silting up of the supply which now occurs in the existing slough along NM Highway 63, and creation of a wetland in the existing slough. Other bank and channel restoration will also be done.

### **Firewise Program**

UPWA has also been notified that it’s Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP) Grant Proposal was approved. This \$200,000 two year project will establish a “Firewise“ Program in the Pecos Canyon, review the San Miguel County Wildfire Protection Plan, assess the need for forest thinning in areas of highest risk, and conduct required NEPA work preparatory to actual thinning.

### **Welcome Rachel Folk**

Other good news for UPWA is that a full time Vista/Americorps Volunteer, Rachel Folk, will begin work July 25 for one year. Her tasks will include further organization building, fundraising, and grant writing. This addition to staff will enable UPWA to continue to grow, and seek funding for additional stream restoration projects in the watershed.

Finally, UPWA expects to receive its third EPA 319 Grant this fall to revisit the UPWA Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS) in light of new developments in the watershed, including the NMDG&F Capacity Assessment Study, the UPWA Recreational Use Study, and the formation of Pecos Canyon State Park.

## **Treasurer’s Report**

Ed Schulz

I usually give you our balances and continue to thank you for supporting our causes. We have 3 accounts at First National (Regular, RGCT, TCYEP) and all are healthy with various CD's. This month I would like to review non-monetary donations which our conservation group has arranged through TU national. We have the potential for receiving \$100,000 from TU National via our work on RGCT restoration as with our spending on the Alamitos combined with volunteer hours help a match for larger amounts returning to New Mexico. **If you donate any time to Native Trout Projects or Activities, please Email us as we can submit your time to TU National for an approximate credit of \$20/hour.** I would point out that we cannot double dip; meaning if you help at the Pecos cleanup, the Pecos Watershed turns in those hours for their own match. Same is true for Comanche creek workdays as Art Vollmer has received approval for matches and those funds will stay with the Comanche projects.(See his article) Any other restoration projects (Meetings, Workdays, Advocacy activities, or presence at events) qualify as long as it pertains to Native Trout. This match started Jan 1, 2009 and should be multi year; I will do annual reporting to TUNational on calendar year end. Our newsletter will provide working opportunities or feel free to contact any of us for time donating projects. Thank you again for supporting our projects.

## Comanche Creek Workdays

Art Vollmer

Due to delays with NEPA documentation and other issues beyond our control, the Comanche Creek restoration workshop in the Valle Vidal this summer needs to be re-scheduled. The new dates are August 21-23. The primary focus of the workshop will be placing in-stream structures along the upper reach of Comanche Creek to protect severely eroded banks (see photo). If time and number of volunteers permit, we may also work on maintaining grazing exclosures to protect woody vegetation and planting willow cuttings. Keep checking the Chapter web site for updates - <http://www.truchas-tu.org/conservation.htm>

We are hoping for a large volunteer turnout this year. Volunteer help is especially important this year given an announcement last year the US Fish & Wildlife Service that the Rio Grande cutthroat trout (RGCT) be formally proposed for protection under the Endangered Species Act. The EPA grants that have helped fund this project in recent years have ended. However, Truchas Chapter has received a \$9,480 Embrace-A-Stream (EAS) grant from TU National to help fund this year's work to restore RGCT habitat. The fact that our proposal competed against 47 other proposals and was fully funded speaks well of the importance TU National thinks of this work. All Chapter members who have supported this project should be proud. Our friends and partners with New Mexico Trout also provided \$500 in matching funds to the project. But the work required of you is not done. This grant will require the Chapter to match the EAS funds with volunteer in-kind labor. So this year more than ever ***we need you to volunteer*** to help continue TU's efforts with this multi-year project.

This is a great opportunity to learn first-hand about stream restoration from professionals. You can also

view the fish barrier TU helped fund a couple of years ago. (NM Game & Fish hopes to be able to reintroduce pure RGCT to Comanche Creek above the barrier this summer.) After working on the creek, you can take the opportunity to fish for rainbows, cutthroats, and cutbows in the Rio Costilla or for 20" rainbows in Shuree Ponds. Please consider staying for the weekend and enjoying the beautiful Valle Vidal while helping to restore RGCT habitat. As in the past, the USFS will allow us to camp for free near the lodge at Shuree Ponds Friday and Saturday nights.

More information on the Comanche Creek Native RGCT Restoration Project can be found online at:

<http://www.comanchecreek.org/> and <ftp://ftp.nmenv.state.nm.us/www/swqb/WPS/CTW/ClearingTheWaters-Spring2009.pdf>

If you are interested in volunteering for this project, please contact Art Vollmer by phone at 505-476-6004 (days) or 505-474-1495 (evenings) or by e-mail at [flyfishn@peoplepc.com](mailto:flyfishn@peoplepc.com). He'll contact interested people once the date of the workshop is finalized.



Post vanes installed along Comanche Creek -- note sedges and grasses re-establishing along raw right bank.

## Jack's Creek

Karen Denison

During a recent conversation with another longtime Santa Fean, we realized that many members in Truchas Chapter hadn't been here during the heyday of another organization dedicated to conservation and education which sadly faded from the scene as it went to happen with volunteer-run operations. In a tip of the hat to those folks still around who worked with me back then, I will share a little update on one of our projects.



In the mid-1990s, Sangre de Cristo Flyfishers, an affiliate of the Federation of Fly Fishers, had upwards of 200 (mostly Santa Fe) members and active committees covering conservation, youth education and a monthly newsletter. I was a work project coordinator for a time and during that year or so we worked on projects in the Valle Vidal, cleaned the Pecos River, and raised funds for a special volunteer stocking of Brown Trout fry in the Chama below Abiquiu Lake. Along with our partners in NMDGF and Santa Fe National Forest, most of whom have either retired or transferred elsewhere, SDCF also helped with a restoration of RGCT in a little tributary of the Pecos called Jack's Creek.

On the appointed day, volunteers ranging from kids to grayhairs arrived toting sparkling clean buckets and large carboys for the "fish salvage" which was the first step in the restoration. A migration barrier was already in place on the tiny stream and our task for the day was to remove as many healthy, wild but non-native fish as possible to take downstream. An aerator truck stood ready and staff from NMDGF and USFS manned electroshocking backpacks. And we worked hard. Shocking and netting fish in tight quarters is difficult. Traveling on foot, volunteers

hauled buckets of trout large and small (up to 12 inches or so), rainbows, browns and brook trout, out to the waiting truck. By the afternoon, the team was pooped and it was time for the release. We reconvened at Cowles for the reverse operation, transferring the fish to buckets to hand-carry along the river there. Although we were able to recover fish from only about a mile of the stream, I think I remember seeing a couple hundred fish swimming in the truck before the release.

Over the next couple of years, the stream was treated with a piscicide to kill the remaining non-natives, then a capture-and-transfer of small RGCT from another area stream (Doctor Creek perhaps?) was used to re-seed Jack's Creek. Because there was no hatchery or holding facility for RGCT at that time, restoration relied on capturing as many wild fish as possible of all age classes and transferring immediately. Probably less than 200 fish were used to seed the many miles of Jack's Creek in the mid-1990s.

My husband and I enjoyed a recent Sunday morning on Jack's Creek exploring and assessing how the little cutthroat have fared. I'm happy to report that they



Hunting fish in Jack's Creek

were fat, lively, and in every quiet pocket of water they should be. If you go to visit them yourself, please clean your boots well to help reduce the transfer of whirling disease, dydimo, and other possible pests—and say hello for me!

**New Mexico Hosts  
TU's Southwest-Rocky Mountain  
Regional Meeting**

Kevin Reilly

In May, thirty-two volunteer TU leaders and TU national staff met in Santa Fe to discuss the status of TU in the Southwest, in the Rocky Mountains, and in California. Volunteer leaders from eight states attended. The discussions were frank and helpful, and a report of the meeting was prepared and sent to senior TU staff, to TU national board members, and to others.

A major theme of the meeting's discussions was the fact that, if TU is to survive into the future, it will need to expand its membership to include more women, more minorities, and—especially—more young people. TU needs to reach out to kids and young adults and involve them in fishing and in conservation work. This concern is being addressed by our chapter through its youth outreach program, the Truchas Chapter Youth Education Program, which is actively expanding.

Another theme of the discussions was that TU needs to broaden the audience it tries to reach. While TU will always be concerned about native trout, for example, it is about much more than that. TU's mission is to conserve, protect, and restore our

coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. TU's audience is everyone who has—or should have—an interest in water and watersheds.

The meeting was a great success, and it is the first time the New Mexico Council has hosted a national or regional meeting. For more information or a copy of the report of the meeting, contact Kevin Reilly at [reilly.kevin.v@gmail.com](mailto:reilly.kevin.v@gmail.com).

**RGCT in Comanche Creek**

Kevin Reilly

Today[July 2], Mary Beth, our dog Cassie, and I helped stock over 5000 RGCT in Comanche Creek. We stocked a lot of three-year-olds (many of which were 12 inches or longer) and more one-year-olds, and they were beautiful. As soon as we stocked the trout, they were taking insects off the surface. By the end of July, NMDGF will stock RGCT fry in the creek. Comanche Creek is open for catch and release fishing.

There was a big group of people from NMDGF, the Carson National Forest, and the Fish and Wildlife Service. All of us were saying, "What a great day this is," and it is. I've worked for this day now for 6 years, and others--like Bill Schudlich, Jan Crawford, Art Vollmer, to name just a few--have worked for this day for a much longer time. This is a great day!

**Event Calendar for Truchas Chapter, Friends and Partners**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Contact / Information</b>
July 18 - 19	Trailwork, East Fork Jemez	NMT	Phyllis Martinez, Jemez RD 575-829-3535 <a href="http://newmexicotrout.org/cons_2009.html">http://newmexicotrout.org/cons_2009.html</a>
late July, 4 days backpack	Trout monitoring, San Pedro Parks	SFNF	Chantel Cook, 505-438-7879
August 21-23	Comanche Cr. Workshop, Valle Vidal	TC-TU, NMT	Art Vollmer 505-476-6004

TC-TU = Truchas Chapter    NMT = New Mexico Trout    UPWA = Upper Pecos Watershed Association    SFNF = Santa Fe National Forest