

East Yellowstone Chapter of Trout Unlimited

P.O. Box 3008

Cody, WY 82414



<http://www.eastyellowstonetu.org/>

November 10th, 2016 Meeting Minutes

In Attendance

Dave Crowther, Lorna Anderson, Birney Holberg, Bob & Judy Capron, Elaine & Bill Tabacinski, Randy & Donna Moore, Dave & Cathy Sweet, Larry & Maxine Thomas, Alicia Viskoe, Andy Whiteman, Tom Anderson, Jason, Madison, & Joshua Burckhardt, Art Schueneman, Mark Vondersaar, Gregg & Jane Bierei, Bob Vossellor, Dave Livingston, Marion Morrison, Jed Smith, Amanda Wilson, Linda Trask, Tom Reed, Duane Feick, Tommy Thompson, Kathy Crofts, Mike Arnold, Bobby Rock, Tim Wade, Richard Jones, Vana & Bill Camp, Lew & Ellie Wiser, Sam Hochhalter.

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order by President Dave Crowther followed by introductions by those in attendance.

Approval of Minutes of October, 2016 Meeting: -- a motion was made, seconded, and approved.

Treasurers Report: Cathy Sweet presented data on income, expenses on total assets (\$79,175.23).

Committee Updates

Conservation – Bob Capron

- Fish rescue – Bob distributed tally of fish that were rescued during 9 days of electroshocking
 - 2861 Browns, 893 Rainbows, 91 Cuts, 24 Lake Trout, 1 Brookie, 432 White Fish; 4302 total
 - Bob thanked volunteers including Lorna and Cathy for providing lunches each day
 - Thank you letters to irrigation districts, Merit Energy, and Rocky Mountain Sports will be sent by Mark V, and an ad will be placed in the Cody Enterprise expressing our appreciation to all those involved.
- Mike Williams of Merit Energy is interested in helping with the fish rescue next year and has also offered backhoe and welding assistance if we need it for any of our projects.
- Work will continue tomorrow, Friday, November 11th, on the Corbett Dam River Access Trail project, removing debris generated during trail restoration
 - Volunteers should meet at the trail at 2pm
 - The Outdoor Club will be assisting; Randy Moore will get the chipper; additional volunteers are welcomed

Fundraising Committee - George Simonton & Birney Holberg:

- No raffle tonight.
- Birney distributed a handout listing various fundraising ideas

Web Site Coordinator – Lorna Anderson:

- If anyone is interested, Lorna could use some assistance in updating the EYTU web site to make it more consistent with the state site, and to help keeping the EYTU Facebook page updated.

Wyoming TU Council – Dave Sweet

- The Wyoming Council 2016 Fall Conference hosted by EYTU was a success
 - Most chapters were represented
 - Several topics were covered, for example fundraising; also, Jason Burckhardt and Tommy Thompson presented project updates
 - The raffle raised \$1300
 - EYTU was awarded the Traveling Trophy.
 - Thanks to Lorna Anderson for making the various arrangements required for the event to happen

Old Business:

- There is no decision yet from Commissioner Rael on whether EYTU will receive a Commissioner's License in 2017.

- Dave Crowther wrote Mr. Rael a letter discussing our support of projects such as the fish screen rehab.
- 6 of the 8 licenses Rael has to give out have already been awarded.

New Business:

- Nomination of new EYTU officers for 2017
 - Dave Crowther volunteered to be Treasurer, Jason Burckhardt volunteered to continue as Vice President, and Mark Vondersaar volunteered to continue as Secretary
 - Randy Moore, Bill Tabacinski, Bobby Rock, Tom Anderson, and Tom Reed received nominations for President; Randy, Bill, Bobby, and Tom A declined, and Tom Reed agreed to consider serving as President after he learns more about the requirements.
- Public Lands “Pint Night”
 - Tuesday, December 6th, 6pm-8pm, Cassies, 214 Yellowstone Ave.
 - An opportunity for concerned citizens to engage in conversation about “Keeping Public Lands in Public Hands”
 - Language in the WY constitution makes transfer of Federal lands to the state unlikely
 - Dave Sweet distributed a brochure summarizing the history of public land laws
 - The concerns shared by hunters, anglers, and others recreating on public lands is that if transferred to the state and the state experiences budgetary shortfalls, then there could be a tendency to sell off the public land, and private ownership often means reduced access.
 - It was suggested that EYTU may want to partner with the Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Project in their effort to prevent public land transfers.
- The new Cody-Powell Project Healing Waters chapter is having an Appreciation Dinner
 - Saturday, December 10th, 3pm-7pm, Cody Elks Lodge, 1202 Beck Ave.
 - Free to all veterans and immediate family (up to 3 guests)
 - Seeking food and monetary donations
 - Flyer was distributed
 - They will need turkeys (3+), hams (2+), and 5-6 volunteers to assist with serving
 - A motion was made, seconded, and approved to provide monetary assistance as needed, or get donations
 - Dave C will discuss with Walmart or Albertsons about possible donations
 - Bobby Rock stated that the Irma will contribute side dishes
 - Let Larry Smith of Project Healing Waters know if you plan to attend and/or volunteer
 - 307-202-2131, underthebridgeflies@gmail.com

Other Business:

- Discussion of Willwood Dam Disaster
 - Park County Commission is holding a public meeting
 - Tuesday, November 15th, 5:30pm-8pm, Park County Fairgrounds Event Bldg., 655 East 5th Street, Powell
 - Objective of the meeting is unclear at this time
 - Open discussion regarding this issue and the upcoming meeting
 - This is probably the biggest environmental excursion in WY in a long time
 - A “show of force” by the concerned public and EYTU would be beneficial
 - The Willwood Irrigation District Manager and representatives from WY DEQ and the Bureau of Reclamation have been invited to the meeting
 - There has been a history of prior events with turbidity below the Willwood Dam elevated in violation of standards, with no punitive damages issued to responsible parties
 - Part of the problem is the amount of sediment in the entire Shoshone watershed
 - Prior upsets have occurred in early 1990s, 2007, and 2010, with citations issued in 2007 and 2010.
 - Mitigation measures were not implemented
 - The Willwood Dam sediment outflow not only damaged private property but had an adverse impact on the Shoshone fishery, making this a violation of TU’s mission. Should EYTU establish an action plan?

- Involve National TU?
- Contact legislators? (eg Coe, Northrup)
- Litigation, depending on DEQ response?
- The DEQ “pointman” is David Waterstreet; 307-777-6709, and he welcomes public input and inquiries
- The public, including EYTU members who are encouraged to attend the meeting and to call Mr. Waterstreet, should demand to know what steps are going to be taken to prevent recurrence, at the Willwood Dam and other watershed locations
- Game & Fish is trying to get the Shoshone listed as impaired for sediment by the DEQ; this listing would increase funding available for mitigation projects

Adjourn Meeting: a motion was made, seconded, and approved.

Program: Sam Hochhalter, Game & Fish Fisheries Biologist

- Presentation regarding Cutthroat Restoration plans following the decision to not proceed with the Eagle Creek project (Rotenone Brook Trout, re-plant Cutthroat).
- G&F Mission: “Conserving wildlife, serving people”
- Interactions with the public lead to the realization that many in the public do not understand the Game & Fish Department, its roles, responsibilities, objectives, and how decisions are made regarding projects, hunting/fishing seasons, quotas, etc.
- For example, many do not understand why steps should be taken to conserve and restore a native species of fish such as Cutthroat Trout
 - Prevent Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing
 - Secure a biological heritage
 - Statutory obligation
- Historically, projects to restore/conservate native species involved recon surveys, assessment of habitat suitability, fish distribution surveys, project design/planning, and public meetings
 - all taking months-to-years
 - often just to be “torpedoed” by public and political sentiment
- What now? Lessons Learned from the mule deer population crash of 1993
 - G&F employed a conventional approach for @ 17 years to restore the mule deer population, only to encounter much public pushback
 - They then decided to implement a Collaborative Learning approach, developed and taught at U of W.
 - Integrates public involvement at all prescribed phases resulting in an increased level of trust, credibility, understanding, and ownership
 - The resulting WY Range Habitat Plan for mule deer population restoration turned out to be basically the same as what G&F wanted based on best available science
- A Collaborative Learning approach will be used for Cutthroat Trout
 - A Situation Assessment is scheduled for this winter.

Next Meeting: Thursday, December 8th at the Sunset House.

- ***2016 EYTU Christmas Party***
- ***Bring a wrapped White Elephant gift; \$20 value or less***
- ***Gift exchange will be same as past years with 2 steals allowed***