

**East Yellowstone Chapter
Trout Unlimited
P.O. Box 3008, Cody, WY 82414**

Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2008

Those Present: Bob Capron, Bob and Pat Kuper, Dave & Cathy Sweet, Dave Crowther, Merel & Chris Nielsen, Karen Ritscher, Laura Leslie, Jason Burckhardt, Carissa Camp, Bill & Vana Camp, Larry & Maxine Thomas, Bill Richard, Bobbie & Rich Hostetler, Steve Yegel, Pat & Doreen Shellady, Birney Holberg, Austin & Nellie Williams, Cory Toye, Ray Zubick, Mark Smith, Andy Whiteman, Val Miller

Call to Order: President, Bob Capron called the meeting to order at 6:35pm.

Meeting Minutes: Call for changes or additions to March 13, 2008 minutes as written. With none, offered, Dave Sweet moved to accept, 2nd by Birney Holberg, motion was approved.

Treasurers Report: D. Blakeslee gave treasurers report, advising funds received by the Chapter specifically for 'Save the Yellowstone Cutthroat Fund' being \$14,940.00. Bill Camp moved to approve the report, 2nd by Dave Sweet, motion was approved.

Project Updates:

Save the Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout: Dave Sweet advised the \$14,940.00 funds referred to by the treasurer are private donations. Jackson Chapter is sending \$1,000 and pledge \$1,000 per year over the next 4 years. Grants approved, not yet received, total \$22,000 with others applied for but approval not yet received. Xanterra has donated a vacation package at Yellowstone Lake Hotel with numerous side packages included. Particulars on this vacation package can be viewed on TU National and TU Wyoming websites, and in Nellie's newsletter. It is being offered through a bid process with a minimum bid of \$400.00. **Dave Sweet is accepting bids, call 307-527-9959.**

Shoshone River Trail: Dave Sweet reported volunteers are to meet at the Belfry Bridge, 8am Saturday and work upstream as far as possible. Full funding for the metal stairs to connect with the Paul Stock Trail has been achieved through G&F, Fish Wyoming Grant and donations from City of Cody, City Parks & Rec. Dist. and Park County Recreation. The City of Cody will maintain the stairway.

Shoshone River Cleanup: Steve Yekel reported good community volunteer turnout and the cleanup went well. 8 yards of material was hauled to the landfill which included 24 tires.

Trout Creek Drum Installation: Bob Capron advised they anticipate installing around May 1st. He will monitor and advise volunteers.

Weekend of Hope: Bob Capron reported Powell organizers would like to have eight (8) volunteers from our Chapter to assist on either the May 23rd and/or the 24th. Please coordinate with Bob Capron 587-2456.

State Council Meeting: Nellie Williams reported Wyoming TU Council meeting in Pinedale May 2-4. There are various positions to be filled if members are interested. All members are welcome to participate. Bob Capron, Pat Shellady and Dave Sweet plan to attend.

Chapter Web Site: Birney Holberg reported the committee liked the website offered by Yahoo at \$11.95 per month and feel it is worth developing. The site offers a software package, unlimited pages for information and a member from our chapter can update it. Bob Capron called for a vote in favor of developing a website, it passed unanimously. Birney passed a questionnaire requesting members advise what the purpose of the website should be and what information they would like to see included.

North Fork River Access: Bob C. reports the access has been approved, he will organize volunteers to work on the Kiosk. Steve Yekel, WG&F is working with BLM, there is a 30 day appeal time now in effect, but they anticipate beginning construction May 12th on a low impact access and boat ramp.

Willwood Canal: Permission has been granted for fish rescue in the Willwood Canal beginning at the end of this irrigation season.

Other Business:

Electro-shock Classes: There are a number of chapter volunteers willing to take the class and assist in fish rescue. Class cost is \$200.00 per person. Bill Camp moved to approve chapter funds for 5 people to take the class. The motion was 2nd and approved.

Mark Smith, WG&F, Fisheries Biologist was introduced to discuss netting operations completed last summer on the Cody Canal. An overview of process and results:

Studies began in the 1950's but lack of good equipment gave poor results. With advancements in technology, overtime, better information has been collected. From 2006 through current entrainments, more accurate information has regularly been collected. The type of nets used in the Cody Canal entrainment will catch fish less than 2" in size. The purpose of the studies is to define the fish entrainment, in other words, the numbers of fish that move from the river into the irrigation canals and diversions.

On the Cody Canal entrainment, G&F set the nets where water is diverted from the South Fork of the Shoshone into the Cody Canal. Once the fish leave the river and enter the canals and diversions, they are considered to have moved past the point of no return.

Numerous fish had been marked at that point to gauge movement and very few fish were recorded as ever returning to the river. The Cody Canal entrainment netted nine (9) different species and totaled over 50,000 fish. Of that total, over 7,300 were trout. Statistics show trout movement is a more seasonal movement into the canals, with peak movement early when the canals are first turned on in April and May. Though many fish are taken by predators as the water recedes, it is felt somewhere between 1- 10% of the trout that have moved into irrigation canals and diversions can and are effectively being salvaged and returned to the rivers by way of electro-shocking.

Mark's presentation was well prepared and delivered. Hearing the time spent and efforts expended over the years was a real eye opener. Our hats are off to the WG&F for pulling together solid statistics showing the danger posed to our river fisheries. With the figures showing an overwhelming number of fish lost annually in the irrigation canals, hopefully, there can now be coordinated efforts toward working on solutions to correct the problem.

Next Meeting: May 8th, 6pm at Sunset House in Cody

Though there will be no regular Chapter Meetings during the summer months of
June, July or August

We will have our Chapter picnic in June and a campout probably in July