

MRR Newsletter

Madison River Ranch Association

Fall, 2012

Fishing Report...

By Gene Welch

The Threat of Didymo...

An attached alga has been causing nuisance conditions in North American trout streams, especially in the Northwest and Northern Rockies, as well as New Zealand. This is a brief summary of the problem as gleaned from the literature and my personal experience with it in a favorite New Zealand river over the past 25 years. *Page 6*



Wells and Cisterns and Roads and ...

By Dave Crawley

Dave writes about many MRR issues starting on page 3. Read important information about safety, bears, mailboxes, cisterns, fires, roads, gates, and wells throughout the newsletter (pages 3, 5, 7, and 8).

Introducing...

Jeanne Loughrey

I'm Jeanne Loughrey and here is my story. *Page 4*

Are you willing to write "Introducing..." about your family and how you arrived at MRR for a future edition of the MRR Newsletter? Please let me know!
*Ann Costello,
Editor*



From the President's Corner

By Mike Wells

Greetings from the smokin' hot Madison Valley. It has been a scorching, dry summer here that is reflected in the stunted growth of everything from grasses and crops to antlers. "Fire Season" (yes, summer in the Rockies is now regularly referred to by this term) started in late June, the week before the Annual Meeting, when some unsupervised kids with fireworks burned up 15,000 acres in the Bear Trap Canyon and surrounding areas on the lower Madison River. There has been an almost daily layer of smoke from wildfires in the region blanketing the valley since the beginning of August, which obscures the wonderful vistas we usually enjoy and inhibits outdoor activities.

Fortunately, this did not affect the fishing/catching on our part of the Madison. I am happy to report that this season has been stellar compared to recent past years in spite of the spotty salmon fly hatch and the projected hordes of hoppers that never materialized. The wildlife stuck around through these oppressive environmental conditions and just toughed it out. Most readily visible this summer have been the pronghorns, raptors and bluebirds, while deer, elk and others have been somewhat reticent to show themselves. This past week the temps have been dropping at night and we have had a 6X6 bull elk with 27 cows and calves grazing along Homestead Trail in the evenings

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Mike Wells, continued from page 1

serenading us with their bugles and mews. Hopefully fall and winter with cooler temperatures and much needed moisture is on the way.

The 2012 Annual Meeting was well attended by the usual suspects and once again we managed to keep it “short and sweet”. Please refer to the 2012 annual meeting minutes that our secretary Frank Davis so painstakingly and brilliantly compiles, to keep your finger on the pulse of Ranch business and important issues. Board member Paul Schirmer resigned this spring due to life changes and the remaining board members recruited Isaac Arms and appointed him to complete Paul’s term.

We held our first Annual Potluck and Social the night before the Annual Meeting and our regular Annual Work Day the day after the meeting. Both events were fun, well attended and are helping create a pleasant sense of camaraderie and community on the Ranch. Next year we are contemplating scheduling all the events on the same day because some folks suggested that it would be preferable to do this all in one day rather than partial days for a whole weekend. If you have an opinion regarding this please contact the Board of Directors.

All the regular Ranch maintenance has been satisfactorily completed. Roads were graded, automatic gates were serviced or repaired, weeds sprayed and easements mowed. Additional improvement projects that were completed: the fence that borders with \$3 Ranch was replaced (thanks to John Clark for getting this done); new bulletin board inside main entry gate (thanks to Isaac Arms for donating materials and fabricating the structure, and to Isaac and Dave Crawley for installing it); Private Drive sign at the upper entry to Ranch from Wade Lake Road (thanks to Peter MacDougall for suggesting it, thanks to Dave Crawley for acquiring and installing it); fire fighting cistern installed by community well (an extra special, super gigantic thanks to Dave Crawley for his herculean effort in getting this done). Also...in August, lightning struck and killed the community well pump that was subsequently replaced (thanks once again to Dave Crawley who jumped right on it and got it repaired as quickly, efficiently and cheaply as possible). For more details on these projects please read the other articles in this newsletter.

There were a couple of incidents this summer when

Home Owner Association members *confronted* contractors that had been hired by the Board of Directors to express their dissatisfaction with work that had been or was being performed. Due to the fact that individual HOA members are not privy to the details of the contracts with these contractors the Board of Directors requests that all complaints and comments about work performed or being performed by contractors hired by the Board of Directors be directed to the Board as a whole or to an individual Board member.

FYI...there are 3 new homes being built on the Ranch this year and there were 2 weddings (Toalson’s son Chris and Wells’ son Zach). Just more proof that MRR will keep growing as a community and that the future generations want in on the action. We need to be very thoughtful as we move forward.

In closing I would like to encourage all MRR members to be good neighbors and community members. The few complaints I hear are due to people not knowing or not abiding by our rules and regulations. We come to this Ranch for as many different reasons as there are people here but none of us come to be aggravated. Let’s be considerate of our neighbors and conscious of the ramifications of our actions.

Have a great winter!

Mike Wells

Many MRR residents and their guests enjoyed the first annual potluck dinner





Fire Cistern – Our Fire Chief, Shawn Christensen, and his Assistant Chief, Scott McClintic, have been all over us for the past few years to get our development in alignment with Madison County requirements which apply to new developments in regards

to fire prevention. If the Madison River Ranch were applying for a permit today for a new development, as it now exists, the permit would be denied. We do not meet the minimum requirements for fire hydrants. Please understand that our ranch was developed before these standards were in place, and the pressure on us is only a strong recommendation, not a requirement. All of the Board members agree that we made a giant step forward this summer with the installation of a 13,000-gallon underground tank adjacent to the community well. It is now filled with water and ready in the event of a wildfire.

Hans Thallmayer and I discovered some of the secrets of Stonehenge when we unloaded the huge tank from a semi using a couple of ramps, some chains, and our two trucks. The tank is 25' long, 9.5' in diameter, and weighs about 14,000 lbs. We intrepidly followed the precise instructions of Bret Silver (Is that a cool name or what?) who is the owner of "Tanks for Your Business." I worked with Bret throughout the process of finding our tank, inspecting it, refurbishing and coating it, plumbing it, and finally delivering it to The Madison River Ranch.

We are still a long way from being in alignment with new development requirements, but it is a start. The Fire Department is recommending we install several more of these at various locations around the ranch. The location of the first cistern was chosen, in consultation with our Fire Chiefs, for several reasons: (1) The cistern is located at one of the most distant points on the ranch from a source of quickly pumpable water (the Madison River); (2) It is located at one of the most western locations on the ranch and it is considered that a major fire will most likely come from the National Forest – from the west or southwest – the direction of the prevailing winds; (3) The cistern may be refilled since it is adjacent to the community well.

The community well itself cannot be considered a significant source of water during a fire because: (1) The flow rate is way too low (approximately 9 gpm); and (2) It is likely during a major fire that the electricity and therefore, the well pump, will be out. The Fire Department can pump water out of the cistern using the onboard pumps at an extremely fast rate of approximately 100 gallons per minute via the 8" diameter standpipe in the cistern. They will be able to refill their tanker truck approximately seven

times and use it to fight fire directly and to deliver drop tanks to areas of operation until reinforcements from neighboring communities arrive.

Our tank is now safely in the ground and filled with 13,000 gallons of water. This gives our local fire department (MVRFD, Station 2) tremendous capability. Their 1800-gallon tanker truck, the most likely to first arrive on scene, will expend its total supply after about 17 minutes of continuous flow. So, before we had the cistern, the initial responders would have to leave the fire and head down to the Madison River to refill. Now they will most likely be able to stay on the scene, refilling from the cistern until reinforcements from neighboring communities arrive with more equipment and more water.

The installation of the fire cistern may favorably affect your homeowners' insurance rate. When I filled out the application for insurance I remember the thorny question of how far my house was from the nearest fire hydrant. The answer was forty miles. I now have a hydrant (technically known as a "dry hydrant") less than a mile from my house. So check with your insurance company for a possible change in your rate. *D. Crawley*



Introducing... Jeanne Loughrey

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I was born in Schenectady, New York, and am an only child. My dad was an accountant for GE. Then, along came World War II. My life would never be the same again. I had just completed 8th grade. He was a Reservist and was activated. I became an 'Army Brat'. My teenage years were not usual at all. First stop was New York City where my dad was on the German Exclusion Boards. I went to an all girls' honor high school on the Upper East Side – rode the 3rd Ave. elevated back & forth every day. This lasted about 6 months then we were on the road again to Carmel, California where he was at Ft. Ord for 2 months preparing to go to the Far East to invade Japan. My mom and I drove back across the country to Allentown, PA where my grandparents lived, for approximately 2 months.

As most folks know we dropped the H Bomb on Hiroshima, making an invasion unnecessary. This was fortunate as the planned attack route was through the Inland Sea – a total death trap. My dad was assigned Military Governor of Saga Ken (State) on the island of Kyushu. Saga is the ceramic Ken of Japan. My mother and I were on the first boatload of dependents to Japan. Can you imagine 800 women and children on one ship? We lived in the very elaborate home of a shipping magnate ala all the servants for about 1-1/2 years and then on to the island of Takimatsu for another 1-1/2 years. The only fun part was that I got to play table tennis with the then current Japanese champion. I was 18 when we returned to the States, again back to New York City. The whole time I was in Japan I took only one correspondent high school course but I did a lot of reading. As you can see high school didn't exist for me. I challenged the New York State boards, passed and graduated.

I went to Indiana University where I met and married my first husband (John) and father of my 3 sons and 1 daughter. We drove to San Francisco where my dad was posted. John went to UC Berkeley to get a degree in Wildlife Management.

Now the fun begins! Our first job was with the National Park Service as the one outpost ranger at Crater Lake NP, Oregon. We lived in an old CCC cook and bunk house for about 4 years. Becky had only been born a few months when we were transferred to Morristown National Historical Park in New Jersey - another drive across the country. About two years later we were transferred to Sequoia Kings Canyon National Park in California - yet another long drive back across the country. We lived there for about twelve years. I did a lot of backpacking in the Sierras and learned to fly on a small strip out of Three Rivers. We owned a Cessna 150. I loved exploring the backcountry in that small plane. We also did a lot of skiing. We were on the National Ski Patrol and the kids became quite proficient in racing. Our team raced in the Western Conference and often came home with trophies.

In 1972 we were transferred to the National Fire Center in Boise, Idaho as the first National Park Service representative. I took the job as Controller of Bogus Basin Ski Area. I guess city living wasn't for us as we grew apart and soon divorced. We had flown the Cessna to Boise and a few months later a student pilot crashed it. We then bought a Mooney Ranger 20 low wing that we sold during the divorce. I joined 3 other guys in a Cessna 185. A few years later I sold my share as I was too busy and just didn't have time to 'bore holes' in the sky. Need to do that to stay proficient and safe.



I fell in love with my second husband, the manager of the ski area. We got married – that might be called 'dipping your pen in the Company ink'. Life for me took on a whole different meaning. He was an avid hunter (upland game birds/ducks/geese) and fisherman. He taught me how to shoot and fish. I loved it and we went every chance we had. We were married about 10 years when he died of leukemia in Nov. 1990. In August of 1989 we purchased Lot 73 on Pronghorn Lane here on the Ranch. He and I had always spent a lot of time fishing in Montana. We also owned an acre of land on Silver Creek near Sun Valley in Idaho, a premier flyfishing stream.

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RANCH ROADS - The three heavily traveled roads on the ranch – Madison Trail, Gravelly Trail, and Flatiron Trail – were all graded, watered, and rolled in early May. 100 cubic yards of new material were added where needed, most of it on Flatiron Trail. The less-traveled roads were rock-raked. The roads were in wonderful shape at the completion of this annual maintenance, but then some areas began to develop significant washboard with the heavy summer traffic.

Some degree of washboard is probably unavoidable on any gravel road. There are probably multiple factors that caused this condition including heavy traffic (especially heavy construction vehicles), the simple fact that the maintenance was done very early in the year, and excessive vehicle speed. But an additional factor this year seems to be that the new road mix does not seem to have the best ratio of gravel to dirt. We don't think it has enough binder in it. This material came from the same mix the county used on the lake road, and it started to develop the same problem fairly quickly after it was applied. The material we get seems to vary in composition each year depending on what is available. Our contractor, Gordy Mattson, is coming back this week, the first week of September, to re-grade the problem areas on Flatiron Trail. He is doing this at no cost to the Association since the washboard developed so quickly. I plan to address this issue thoroughly with our road contractor next year with the goal of a smooth surface that lasts all summer.

We are also exploring the application of magnesium chloride to some sections of the road. This would not only help control dust, but it is hygroscopic and actually helps to hold the road together and eliminate washboard. I have driven on a number of roads treated with magnesium chloride and it makes a very nice surface out of a gravel road after several years of application. A major drawback is the cost. It is quite expensive. We will be discussing this further at our next annual meeting of the Association.

Dave Crawley

Jeanne Loughrey, continued from page 4

In early 1991 I became the Controller of a high scale land developer, O'Neill Enterprises. We developed properties throughout the Treasure Valley and Sun Valley. I also took care of Peter O'Neill's personal finances and his various other entities. I'm still doing this along with the books for two Home Owners' Associations of a property we recently developed. In August we received approval for a new development in Sun Valley - the last Hoorah. The fun just keeps going.

I had the log cabin built in 1992 at Madison River Ranch. Becky, my daughter, and I went to the first meeting in Bozeman where Yellowstone Basin Properties turned over the Ranch to the MRR Home Owners' Association. We held our first annual meeting in West Yellowstone in 1992 and I was elected to the MRR Board. I really enjoy my time here on the Ranch. I try to spend 2 weeks out of each month here – May through October. It was an honor to serve on the Board for 17 years. However, I am enjoying the tranquility since then. It is so beautiful here.

Bear Safety – A sow grizzly and two cubs were sighted at various locations on the ranch in May and June. Fortunately no bear-human close encounters were reported, so it appears we are doing a good job of living with the big bruins of the Madison Valley. As part of the Greater Yellowstone Eco System it is extremely important that we all realize our responsibilities with regard to storage of food and garbage so that this peaceful coexistence continues. I'd also like to remind everyone to carry bear spray on walks and know what to do in the event of a bear encounter. Please review the handouts on bear safety I supplied at the annual meeting. You will also find information and precautions about this on the bulletin board. *D.C.*



New Bulletin Board - Please stop and checkout the new bulletin board just inside the main gate. Isaac Arms designed and fabricated this item and he and I installed it. This will be used only for important notifications to owners and guests– particularly safety issues, such as bear precautions and current fire restriction. We were trying to think of a way of communicating the county fire restrictions this summer and Mike Wells came up with this idea. It is much more noticeable than the postings we were tacking up on the log entry. Please check the board for any changes to the notifications whenever you enter, and when you see Isaac, please thank him for doing such a nice job on this project.

Dave Crawley

Gene Welch: Didymo



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Didymo (*Didymosphenia geminata*) "blooms", or mass accumulations, are not new to the species' range, having been observed over the past 100 years in Scandinavia, but they are new to North America and very recently to New Zealand. The species is native to northern US, Canada and Europe with recordings going back to the 19th century. However, it was not native to New Zealand, so is considered invasive there.

Didymo seems to prefer cool, clear, nutrient-poor

streams with stable flows and substrata. Researchers still are not entirely clear why it blooms in nutrient-poor conditions. Cells are microscopic (~0.1 mm), but when it blooms less than 10% of its mass is cells - the rest being composed of polysaccharide stalks, extruded from individual cells. The stalks coalesce into thick gelatinous masses and smother rocky, rubble bottom-rivers. It's often affectionately called "rock snot". The mats feel like felt and look like toilet paper when parts break off and drift. Didymo mats look more like a fungus than do other diatoms.

Diatom species almost never present a nuisance. Actually, diatoms make up most of the thin, brown, slippery coating on rocks in the Madison, supplying the food for grazing and detritus eating insects. Long stringers of several species of filamentous green algae are usually the nuisance causers in nutrient enriched waters (e.g., Clark Fork), but not diatoms. Didymo does occur in the Madison, but apparently has not caused blooms, maybe because phosphorus is relatively high. Recent evidence from New Zealand indicates that didymo forms the large stalk masses only in low-phosphorus conditions. However, it has bloomed in the Boulder, Bitterroot, Blackfoot and Kootenai Rivers in Montana and Bow River in Alberta, as well as in Glacier Park streams.

The first appearance of didymo blooms in North America was on Vancouver Island, BC in the 1990s. Didymo occurred there previously, but did not cause blooms. Max Bothwell, an attached algae expert with Environment Canada, has linked the occurrence and expansion of didymo blooms to increased visitation by globally mobile fishermen with felt-sole waders. The sudden occurrence of blooms may indicate a genetic variant. Fishermen also were the obvious cause for didymo blooms in NZ, having been first detected

in the South Island's Waiau River in 2004 and in four years was spread to 26 other catchments. One of them was the Clutha River where I have fished very successfully for many years.

However, since didymo invaded, the numbers of fish rising, abundance of emerging caddis and my fishing success have declined markedly the past 5 years. Didymo now covers the previously clean boulder, cobble and rubble bottom with a very disgusting, thick, "woolly", whitish-gray mat, parts of which regularly break off and drift downstream. Fish and Game regularly censuses the population by drift dive, with several swimmers moving downstream spaced across the river. The 2012 count had decreased by 62% from 2006 (data from Fish and Game). I fished three nights in 2012 and caught the only two reachable, rising fish observed. The numerous splashes and gulps of rising fish were absent - so weird and disappointing compared to years past when the problem was too many emerged caddis on the surface for the fish to see the artificial one.

Fishing pressure is slight to modest and has not noticeably changed over the years. Catch limit is still a ridiculous 10 fish or 10 pounds and 1 fish. However, Kiwis usually release most fish and much of the river is unreachable and a safe haven. Pressure (or gear) is probably not the cause for poorer fishing. Rather, Fish and Game attributes fish decline in the Clutha and Waiau to didymo.

As with most fish and wildlife populations, their fate usually rests with the food supply. Insects in New Zealand rivers are not diverse like in the Madison. The summer-long caddis ("sedge") hatch on the Clutha is due to one detritus-eating net spinner - adults are about an inch long. It requires relatively clean rock surfaces for attachment - the pre-didymo condition. The thick didymo mats have eliminated much of the insect's



Gene Welch, continued

habitat and are the likely cause for the decline in hatches, rising fish and fish numbers. There is evidence that insect populations shift from large taxa like caddis flies, mayflies and stoneflies, to small species, such as midges in rivers with didymo invasions.

New Zealand banned felt-sole waders shortly after the problem occurred; they are confiscated at customs and any other type boots are disinfected. To protect the Madison and other rivers, felt-soles should be avoided and other type boots should be disinfected, if worn in other rivers, before fishing the Madison. One minute in a 2% bleach solution is recommended. Until the cause(s) for didymo blooms are better understood, erring on the safe side seems advisable - no felt and disinfect.

Bothwell, M. L., D. R. Lynch, H. Wright and J. Deniseger. 2009. *On the boots of fishermen: The history of didymo blooms on Vancouver Island, British Columbia*. Fisheries 34:382-388.

All references are available on request.

Fire Safety – As most of you know by now, this has been a very dry summer and the wildfire danger is extreme. We have been under Stage I Fire Restrictions in Madison County since July 11th. Earlier in the year we were under Stage II restrictions that are even stricter. Stage I, among other restrictions, prohibits open fires on private land. All of these restrictions are posted on the main gate bulletin board. Suffice it to say there are rather stiff civil and criminal penalties for violation of any of these restrictions that may include up to six months in jail. This is just a reminder that Montana takes these restrictions very seriously.

Please also be reminded that even when and if these fire restrictions are lifted, no open fires are ever allowed on the Madison River Ranch without an approved fire ring AND immediately available running water. No fire is allowed within 200' of timber. The Madison Valley Rural Fire Department also requests that you obtain a fire permit prior to any open burning. Currently, no fire permits are being issued.

The fire department recommends a minimum of 100 feet around structures that is clear of trees, brush, tall grass, and other combustible debris. Firewood should not be stacked within this area. Please inspect your property to be sure you have this “defensible space” around your home and any outbuildings.

Dave Crawley



AUTOMATIC GATES

Our power gates on all three entries are currently up and operating and the gate codes remain unchanged. I worked with Dave Corn of Power Gate Systems (out of Bozeman) on all three gates this summer. All of the gates now have safety devices that prevent the gates from coming down on a vehicle that stops underneath. However, these devices will not “see you coming” though, so please do not try to race the gate when it is coming down or tailgate another vehicle through.

The main gate is an old design and will eventually need replacement since it cannot be modified to correspond to the newer design that we have on the upper and lower gates. We did some major replacement of parts on the main gate this summer in order to hopefully get a few more years of service out of it.

A few things to remember about these gates:

- The main gate will not open in the event of a power outage. Use the “cowboy gate” adjacent to it if the power is out. DO NOT attempt to open the gate manually. The other two gates will work when the power is out since they are both 12-volt battery systems.
- If you see any gate standing open it probably means it has malfunctioned and I have removed the power from it in the open position. Please do not attempt to re-power it or try to fix it.
- Do not race the gate to get in when it is coming down and do not tailgate through.
- If you have trouble with the operation of any of the power gates please contact me at (406) 682-5348 and I will address the issue.

Dave Crawley

COMMUNITY WELL

The community well, on Lot 106 adjacent to Gravelly Trail, was inoperative for almost two weeks in August. This appears to have been a result of damage to the pump by a lightning strike. A notice was posted on the new bulletin board at the main gate to advise folks who use the well for their supply of drinking water that it would not be available for a few days. The repair was complicated when the supply pipe from the pump broke as it was being lifted. The whole rig – supply pipe, wire, and pump – dropped down into the well and had to be fished out. In any case, repairs have been made and the well is now back in service.

Dave Crawley



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Wishing you
and your
family
wonderful
holidays.



Cooking with Martha

By Martha Crawley

Yellowstone Paint Pots Lava Cake

I discovered this recipe when I needed a dessert and just happened to have all the ingredients for this one on hand. I was VERY skeptical that it would actually work, but it does! After baking, the cake is on top and the warm chocolate pudding is underneath. Prepare for Ooooo's and Ahhhhh's! This is from The Best of Bainbridge Cookbook.

Cake:

1 cup flour

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ T. baking cocoa (the powdered kind)

2 T. melted butter

$\frac{1}{4}$ t salt

2 t. baking powder

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk

1 t. vanilla extract

Chopped walnuts (optional)

Sauce:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup granulated sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar

4 T. baking cocoa

1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup boiling water

Mix first 9 ingredients, or 8 if you're not using walnuts. Pour (or spread – mine was pretty thick) into greased 9 X 13 baking dish. Combine sauce ingredients. Pour over batter. Bake at 350 for about 30 minutes. Spoon into individual serving dishes and serve warm with vanilla ice cream.

Links

<http://www.madisonriverranch.org>

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