

MRR Newsletter

Madison River Ranch Association

Spring, 2014



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From the President's Corner

By Mike Wells

Greetings from the beautiful Madison Valley! It's May 14 and I'm patiently awaiting the fishing season opener on our section of the river three days from now. While driving from Bozeman yesterday I encountered several blizzards of caddis on the lower Madison. We had plenty of snow this winter and current conditions indicate a good water year. Recent daytime temperatures have been creeping into the lower 60's and the landscape is starting to green up.

The Ranch was typically quiet and peaceful this winter. The people, animals and birds (except a few ravens, foxes, coyotes and wolves) were gone by late December. With few Ranch residents coming in over the winter there were enjoyably long stretches of solitude.

The Board of Directors is currently planning this year's maintenance and improvement projects. These projects and other issues will be discussed in detail at the next Annual Association Meeting on Saturday, June 28, 2014 from 1-4 PM at the Madison Valley Rural Fire Department building just north of junction of Highway 287 and the Wade Lake Road. This spring you will receive ballots to vote for members to fill open seats on the Board of Directors. Please remember to make your voice heard by voting on the ballots you receive and contacting the current Board of Directors about any issue you think is pertinent.

On Friday, June 27, 2014 from 5-10 PM, we will have our third Annual Pot Luck Social in the Common Area. Come on down and party with your friends and neighbors! This event is open to all association members and their guests. The Association will provide a tent, some tables, some chairs and a portable toilet. Bring your own food, beverages, grill, plates, tables, chairs, etc. Last year we had a great turnout and there were plenty of grills to share along with some really good food and some really big fun!

Also, don't forget to put your brains and body to work for the common good at the Annual Association Work Day on Sunday, June 29, 2014 from 12-4 PM. Please check our website @ <http://www.madisonriverranch.org> for upcoming events and other information you may want.

Happy Trails!

In Memory of John Legler

John Legler passed away March 14, 2014. John was President of the Madison River Ranch Home Owners Association shortly after inception and served in that capacity for a decade or more. He gave extraordinary amounts of time helping us get off to a good start and keeping us on a good path.

In the early years owners ran the Ranch more like a monarchy than a democracy due to extremely limited participation and we were fortunate to have an intelligent, thoughtful leader. 'King John' as he was both affectionately and derisively know at times always had the best interest of the Ranch at heart.

After John left the Board of Directors I started referring to him as 'Dr. John' out of respect for his position in the world of scientific academia and his eccentricities which I found endearing and somehow strangely akin to Dr. John the musician. I have many stories to share about John and know that many of you do as well. I'm looking forward to doing just that and honoring this fine man who was such an instrumental part of our community with the hope that we can keep his spirit alive on the Madison River Ranch that he so loved.

Mike Wells



The following information is written by the Turtle Survival Alliance about the loss of John Legler.

At 11 pm on 28 March 2014 the turtle community lost one of the foremost living turtle biologists in the world, Dr. John M. Legler.

Legler described new species of tortoises and freshwater turtles from both North and Central America and Australia: *Gopherus flavomarginatus* from Mexico, *Kinosternon angustipons* from Panama, *Trachemys scripta taylori* and *Trionyx ater* from Cuatro Ciénegas, Coahuila, Mexico, a new genus of Australian Turtle - *Rheodytes* - as well as other species of Australian turtles. In addition he described a subspecies of snake, *Geophis* and a frog was named after him.

His main contributions to turtle conservation were the techniques he developed which saved the unnecessary slaughter of countless numbers of turtles to obtain stomach contents for dietary studies and eggs for incubation studies. With his son Austin, they developed a technique while in Australia to flush out stomach contents of turtles without causing life-threatening damage to the turtle.

In addition to his life as a turtle biologist, Dr. Legler was an Emeritus Professor in the Biology Department at the University of Utah, where he had taught human anatomy for decades. In honor of his high teaching standards, the University created the Legler Chair of Anatomy in 2010.

John was an avid trout fisherman and tied his own flies. He won medals as an Olympic swimmer, and still swam every day up to a few months before his death. He also painted gourds and built his own straw bale building at his ranch in the mountains of Montana near a trout stream.

West Yellowstone News

Two articles have appeared recently in the West Yellowstone News that may be of interest to you. Brief, general information has been provided here, as well as the link to each article.

State Approves Reintroduction of Rare Fish to Madison Drainage

Mike Moore, West Yellowstone News
April 11, 2014

Arctic grayling have been living in the Madison River drainage for a long time, however populations have declined greatly since the 1980's. In April, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks released an environmental assessment decision notice for the Montana Arctic Grayling Reintroduction Project. This plan would bring the rare fish back into the Madison drainage over a ten-year period.

The goal of this project is to get the population back to a self-sustaining level while trying to prevent the fish from becoming an endangered species. The project plans to use remote site incubators in tributaries of the Madison River to reintroduce the fish. These incubators will likely be installed sometime in May.

<http://www.westyellowstonenews.com/new>

Public Informed on Current Status of Madison River, Hebgen Dam

Mike Moore, West Yellowstone News
May 2, 2014

A status update was presented to the community regarding the Madison River and the Hebgen Dam Project. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, PPL Montana, and the US Forest Service hosted this meeting.

Hebgen dam was built in 1914. In August 2008, deterioration of the dam's stoplogs resulted in failure of the dam. At the same time, mandates required the dam be brought up to new earthquake standards. Since Hebgen could not be drained for construction and repairs, it has been a long, complicated task. Work is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2015.

The flow of water from Hebgen into the Madison is greatly affected by weather conditions. Data from last summer's warm weather and low water has become part of the formula for this year's releases.

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John Clark: Stream Access Update

I have included an article published in the Public Land/Water Access Association (www.PLWA.org) spring 2014 newsletter that explains the Montana Supreme Court ruling upholding the Montana Stream Access Law. This has been a long court case involving public access to the Ruby River in Madison County. PLWA is a non-profit organization that fights for the continued public access to Montana's rivers and public lands.

Reprinted with permission from PLWA, Spring 2014 Newsletter:

A Grass Roots Success

On January 16, 2014 the Montana Supreme Court overturned a lower court decision and assured public access to the Ruby River from bridges on land owned by Atlanta media mogul James Cox Kennedy. The decision sets a precedent that validates all Montana stream and bridge access laws. The Court affirmed a previous decision that two of the county road bridges - Duncan Road and Lewis Lane - have a 60-foot wide public easement intersecting the high water mark of the river. This is the decision that led to the Montana Bridge Access law.

What's new is that the court essentially threw out the District Court ruling on the third bridge - a bridge on the Seyler Lane Road. The lower court had mistakenly ruled there was no recreational access on the bridge because it was on a road created by prescription or regular public use and recreational use was not a basis for creation of the prescriptive right-of-way. On Seyler Lane, the case was sent back to District Court with instructions to determine the width of the public road right-of-way, which had been established by prescriptive use. Significantly, the Court held that once a prescriptive easement is established, access extends to all public uses including recreational use.

The Supreme Court justices rejected the District Court ruling that a secondary easement existed to accommodate maintenance by state and county crews and recognized recreation travel as a legitimate use to help qualify a road for prescriptive easement status. The Court also emphatically upheld Montana's stream access law, stating "the State owns all the waters in trust for the People . . . and that a riparian owner takes his property interest subject to a dominant estate in favor of the public". John Gibson, President of PLWA, stated, "Today's ruling from the Montana Supreme Court confirms once again that our streams are public resources, and not the exclusive playgrounds for the select few. The public's right to wade or float any river or stream in the state has been recognized, as well as the right to access those streams at bridges crossed by public roads. We want to thank Montana Trout Unlimited and the Montana Wildlife Federation as well as our loyal members for their contributions. We have been involved in this case for over ten years and this decision has justified our efforts." He went on to say "Much of our success is due to the great work of the Goetz Law Firm in Bozeman who lead us through the legal maze surrounding access to the public waters of Montana."

Cooking with Martha

By Martha Crawley

Now that spring is here, a good vegetable recipe seems in order. This is easy and delicious. I would use two good-size heads of cauliflower for this recipe, but when I make it for just the two of us, I use one head and halve the other ingredients.

Roasted Curried Cauliflower

Serves 6-8

Recipe from Martha Crawley

12 c. cauliflower florets, about 4 lbs. cauliflower

1 lg. onion, peeled and quartered

1 t. ground coriander

1 t. ground cumin

¾ c. olive oil

½ c. red wine or balsamic vinegar

3 ½ t. curry powder

1 T. paprika

1 ¾ t. salt

Freshly ground pepper

¼ c. chopped fresh cilantro (I omit this because Dave doesn't like it)

Heat oven to 450 degrees F

Place cauliflower in large roasting pan. Pull apart onion quarters to separate layers, and add to cauliflower.

Combine coriander and cumin with oil, vinegar, curry powder, paprika and salt. Pour dressing over vegetables and toss to coat.

Roast vegetables until tender and nicely browned, stirring occasionally (about 35-40 min.).

Can be made 2 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature. Re-warm in 450-degree oven for 10 min. Sprinkle with fresh cilantro if using. Serve warm or at room temperature (I think it's better warm). Enjoy!

Introducing... Roger and Barbara Stommel

Continued from page 1

Roger and Barbara Stommel stopped to investigate the “Madison Valley Land Grab” in 1992, which became known as Madison River Ranch. The sales office in a travel trailer on the highway below the Ranch, helium balloons swirling above the trailer in the ever-present wind, and down payments made by credit card were too much to resist. After three attempts to purchase a lot because we couldn’t act quickly enough, we ultimately found our ideal home site on Lot 139, aka 34 Gravelly Trail.

We wished for a lot with trees but those were already taken, so we started transplanting pines from the nearby forests. In all, we dug and moved over 200 small trees over the next 20 years but the lack of easily-accessible water, wild animals and cattle, and our severe winters took their toll. Today, we have about 75 trees, many of which have survived and are now thriving. Last year we found these trees love commercial fertilizer that’s high in phosphate – oh, well. . . . better late than not at all.

We started our cabin in September 2005, pouring the basement, then putting the floor on and covering it for the winter. Our contractor built the shell in 2006 and Roger did most of the rest, excepting the electrical and plumbing. We were able to start living there in the fall, 2009 and finished both upstairs and down in October 2011. Before it was done, the cabin became a “love-hate” project. Next time, we’ll just pay someone to build our mountain home turnkey. But then again, there won’t be a next time.

Roger retired in 2008 from a career in healthcare administration, thus allowing us to live at the Ranch full-time, May through October. Our home base is Idaho Falls, which is close enough to keep track of, yet far enough away to appreciate having a cabin in the beautiful Madison valley.

With the cabin completed (and we’re not planting more trees), Roger needs to take up fishing again to stay busy. He loves to hike the near-by mountain trails, so if anyone needs a hiking buddy, give us a call. Barb is an avid reader and a full-time quilting enthusiast, with her sewing machine and quilt frame readily accessible in our walkout basement family room, which allows her a wonderful view of the valley below and provides lots of natural daylight.

The Stommel clan includes four grown children, eight grandchildren and one great-grandson. The kids love to sleep on the deck and listen to the coyotes at night, look at the stars and planets through our telescope, hang out at Cliff and Wade lakes, and enjoy the awesome view from ‘up top’. And to our neighbors and friends on the Ranch, stop by for a visit any time - we’re home most days.



Gene Welch: The Myth About Oxygen in Streams

Are trout attracted to riffles or turbulent areas in streams because those areas are more oxygenated, that is, have higher oxygen concentrations? I have often seen that stated in articles about trout fishing. Also, can streams be too productive for the welfare of trout; that is, have lower oxygen concentrations?

Actually, dissolved oxygen (DO) concentrations are rather constant across even a moderately flowing stream at any one time. That is because a flowing stream is usually well mixed across and top to bottom. DO would not be higher in riffles because water cannot hold more than the saturated concentration that is in equilibrium with air at a given temperature. Thrashing the water more vigorously in turbulent rivers will not raise DO above saturation, which at 20° C (68° F) is 9 parts per million (ppm) at sea level. That saturated concentration is less in the Madison due to elevation: 7.3 ppm at 68° F, but 9 ppm at 10° C (50° F), because water holds more DO at lower temperature.

Although constant across the stream at any one time, DO can change diurnally in productive streams. If attached algae are abundant, DO can reach super-saturated levels in the afternoon as photosynthetic addition of oxygen exceeds removal by respiration. That is less likely in turbulent streams like the Madison, because excess DO above saturation is readily lost to the atmosphere. Thus, trout distribution in the Madison is due to habitat and food availability - not DO.

Oxygen super-saturation can be common in quiescent water with lots of photosynthesizing algae, so on warm calm summer days an algae bloom can supersaturate lake water. Fish can sense a DO gradient if one exists, and avoid areas of low concentration. For example, deep water in Hebgen will contain DO at much less than saturation and actually too low for trout, so they avoid those layers.

The most serious problem for trout is in productive, slow flowing streams with very thick mats of stringy algae where lack of turbulence may allow DO to decline to levels as low as 3-4 ppm at night due to high rates of respiration without photosynthesis. During the day DO may reach levels of 200 percent above saturation (18 ppm at 68F). Trout would be stressed and growth and activity would diminish at daily minimum DOs less than 5-6 ppm, despite the higher supersaturated levels during the day. They would try to avoid such low DOs, but that might not be possible because photosynthesis and

respiration by the attached algal mat is likely to be rather uniform throughout the stream. Fish may congregate at the entrance of an oxygenated tributary to escape low DOs. Although the Madison is productive, such low nighttime and high day-time DO would not be expected due to its turbulence, as well as algal abundance being 5-10 times lower than would cause severely low DOs. Suffice it to say, DO may affect trout behavior, and even growth and survival, in some very productive streams with lots of algae, but probably not in the Madison or other moderately productive, fast-flowing streams without stringy dense algal mats.

Shallow, productive lakes often present DO problems for trout, especially during winter ice cover with no possibility of aeration from the atmosphere. Henry's Lake is a case in point where trout apparently congregate around oxygenated tributaries entering the lake. Such productive, shallow lakes have high DO demands from bottom sediments organically enriched by summer algal



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and rooted plant production. The only oxygen available to satisfy the sediment demand is what exists in the water when ice cover forms. The shallower the lake, the less DO available at the start of ice cover. Also, fish kills from low nighttime DO can happen in lakes in summer following large algal blooms when respiration rates remain high and photosynthetic production of oxygen by the dying algae subsides.

The most serious threat to trout habitat in the Madison is water temperature, which becomes marginal now in hot summers, especially in the lower river. Climate change will adversely affect many western trout streams. There will probably be more fishing closures during summer hot spells as air temperatures rise, such as occurred in the Madison drainage streams in Yellowstone last summer and other Montana streams in recent years. Streams are closed due to the added stress to fish during the catch/release process when daily maximum water temperatures are nearing lethal limits. Fourteen-day average daily maximums have reached 73°F in the upper Madison, and 75°F is lethal if continuously exposed for four days, which is routine testing protocol. However, water temperature declines during the cool summer nights in Montana, providing a respite from the afternoon highs (see newsletter fishing note Autumn 2011).
Gene

We hope to see you there...

Friday, June 27
Annual Pot Luck Dinner,
5:00-10:00 p.m., Common Area

Saturday, June 28
Annual Association Meeting
1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Madison Valley Rural Fire Department

Sunday, June 29
Association Work Day
12:00 – 4:00 p.m.

West Yellowstone News, continued from page 2

Fine sediments need to be flushed from the Madison streambed on a regular basis. The last time there was a necessary supply of water to do this was in 2011. It is likely that they will pulse the Madison at some point this summer. If they do pulse the river, it would persist for a minimum of three days.

Recent and previous fish population data in the Madison River was also presented.

http://www.westyellowstonenews.com/news/article_a48504b6-d21d-11e3-bc68-0019bb2963f4.html

MRR Association Board of Directors

Board members are elected to serve three-year terms.
The current Board includes the following people:

Mike Wells, President, *up for re-election in 2016*

John Clark, Treasurer, *up for re-election 2015*

Frank Davis, Secretary, *up for re-election, 2014*

Sue McMahan, *appointed to replace Dave Crawley, Treasurer beginning July 2014, up for re-election in 2015*

Pat Toalson, Gates and Safety, *up for re-election in 2016*

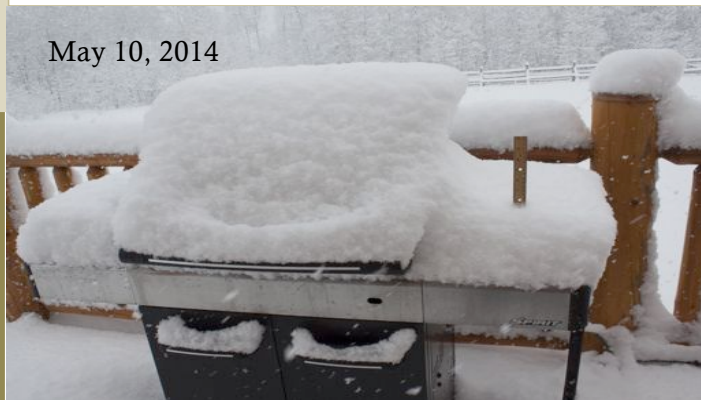
**Please vote for your MRR Board Member(s)
when you receive your ballot!!!**

Webmaster, Marv Gibbs <http://www.madisonriverranch.org>

Newsletter Editor, Ann Costello noniann@gmail.com

*Special thanks to all of you who shared photos for the newsletter:
Mike Wells, John Clark, Roger Stommel, Costello family.*

May 10, 2014



Don't forget...
The gate code is 1004

Links

<http://www.madisonriverranch.org>

PLEASE, if you would like to sign up for electronic delivery of the MRR Newsletter, go to the Madison River Ranch web site, click on the "Contact Us" tab, and sign in.