

# OPTU NEWS

## Old Pueblo Trout Unlimited

Trout Unlimited Chapter 531 [www.optu.org](http://www.optu.org) Editor: John E. Murphy 520-299-3278

Volume 17, Issue 8



### President's Report

Greetings Fellow TUers:



What a summer we have had so far and it is only August! OPTU just conducted it first week long work project on the tributaries to the West Fork of the Black River removing over 3,000 crayfish from some of the most important spawning areas for the Apache Trout. These invasive non native species are thick in these waters and contribute to the limited number of non hatchery trout to reach maturity. Joe Fagan will have an article in next month's newsletter detailing our success, all the participants and future plans for these waters. We are already planning next year's project and purchasing new crayfish traps for all the volunteers we anticipate.

With that said, habitat is not all we care about in OPTU. As you will see from the article by our own Robin Marsett, a number of our members traveled to Durango Colorado to assist a Project Healing Waters outing with tremendous success. Like our workdays, all the volunteers had a wonderful time. When the next opportunity arises to help out in one of these undertakings, grab it, as it will be something you remember and are proud of for a long long time.

Our Board has a number of hot irons in the fire that we are making steady progress on. We are in the process of updating our web site, as I have mentioned earlier, and should have it finished this year. Robin Marsett, and Stan Vanagunas are spearheading that effort. If you have

some input, or would like to see something addressed, contact one of them or yours truly with suggestions.

Mike Mehrer and his committee are making plans for our first ever Halloween get together at the end of October. (When else would it be?) We will have a Ed Engle, a nationally known speaker making presentations throughout the day, casting and fly tying contests, and prizes. Mark your calendars for this event, so you are not out buying little butterfingers for the kids and forget.

Shortly thereafter we will have a group outing along the Verde River just outside of Sedona. Mark your calendars for November 6-8, 2009. We are very excited about this. It will coincide with the beginning of the stocking season for these waters and we are expecting a lot of your friends and OPTU acquaintances.

Finally, I would like to make an appeal for a couple of our members to join our Banquet Committee. We have three people on the committee who carry an awful lot of responsibility and obligation in this undertaking that we put on every year. We need a couple of you who can organize, contact donors, and attend a couple of Committee meetings between now and the end of the year. It won't be a lot of work, but it will help out our other committee members immensely. Give me a call.

Clay Hernandez, OPTU President

Our OPTU August 19th **lie and tie** at Dry Creek Outfitters will be on tying fresh and saltwater knots and rigging. Steve Brillhart will be leading this session. Steve has done this for OPTU in the past and anyone who has attended his past knot tying sessions will tell you that they are very informative and worthwhile. Whitey

## OFFICERS

**President:** Clay Hernandez

520-299-9811 (h); 520-248-6954 (c)

[czhernandez@comcast.net](mailto:czhernandez@comcast.net)

**Vice President:** Roger McKee

[mcroger7@msn.com](mailto:mcroger7@msn.com)

**Secretary:** Mike Mehrer

520-762-4035 (h)

[mehrog2@gainbroadband.com](mailto:mehrog2@gainbroadband.com)

**Treasurer:** Lauren Lucas

[laurenklucas@comcast.net](mailto:laurenklucas@comcast.net)

**Conservation Officer:** Jeff Collins

520-744-8799 (h); 520-403-4062 (c)

[jnc51@comcast.net](mailto:jnc51@comcast.net)

**Membership Coordinator:**

Michael Fletcher 520-744-1831

[mmltfletch@msn.com](mailto:mmltfletch@msn.com)

**Outings Coordinator:** Open

**Youth Education Coordinator:**

Steve Reiter (h) 520-795-2388 email:

[sreiter4@cox.net](mailto:sreiter4@cox.net)

**Public Relations Coordinator:**

Open

## Board

Linda Bucy (h) 520-795-7746

Danny Hooper

Scott Kuktavy (h) 520-731-1134

Debbie Lynch (h) 520-742-7708

John Singley (h) 520-318-4791

Stan Vanagunus (h) 520-743-0210

**Newsletter Editor:** John Murphy

(520)299-3278; email:

[murphy@pharmacy.arizona.edu](mailto:murphy@pharmacy.arizona.edu)

## TU Bring Back the Natives Contacts

**Amy Harrig**, TU-BLM BBN Coordinator  
(303) 440-2937 e-mail: [aharrig@tu.org](mailto:aharrig@tu.org)

**Fred Rasmussen** Regional Vice President  
for the Southern Rockies (Region 8)  
[salmo@snobol4.com](mailto:salmo@snobol4.com)

**Don Duff**, TU-Forest Service Partnership  
Coordinator (801) 524-3945 e-mail:  
[tudtrout@aol.com](mailto:tudtrout@aol.com)

**Dave Nickum**, Southern Rockies  
Conservation Director Greenback and  
Colorado River Cutthroat Trout (CO) (303)  
837-9383 e-mail: [dnickum@tu.org](mailto:dnickum@tu.org)

**Paul Dremann**, Utah Council V.P. for  
Conservation Bonneville Cutthroat Trout  
(Utah/Nevada) (801) 467-3862

e-mail: [pdremann@xmission.com](mailto:pdremann@xmission.com)

**Jamie Hunter**, So. California TU Council  
Representative Little Kern River & Volcanic  
Golden/Paiute Cutthroat (CA) (949)  
493-2298

**Mike Norte**, Rio Grande Chapter - Rio  
Grande Cutthroat/ Gila Trout (NM/CO)  
(505)844-0935 e-mail: [norte@earthlink.net](mailto:norte@earthlink.net)

**Jim Lynch**, Old Pueblo Chapter - Apache  
Trout (Arizona) (520) 742-7708



Theme photo for 2009 - Foggy morning  
at the J-hole, Kenai River, Alaska

## Calendar

**Aug 5:** Regular meeting at 6:30

pm. Speaker TBA. To be held at  
the offices of Scott Kuktavy, 1836  
S. Research Loop.

**Aug 19:** Lie and Tie (6:30 pm);  
Dry Creek Outfitters, 5420 E.  
Broadway, Suite 254. Call Eric at  
326-7847. This session led by  
Steve Brillhart, will be tying fresh  
and saltwater knots and rigging.  
Steve has done this for OPTU in  
the past and anyone who has  
attended his past sessions will  
tell you that this is very  
worthwhile. Whitey

**Aug 26:** Board meeting at El  
Charro Restaurant - 6 pm -  
Speedway and Swan. Everyone is  
invited.

**Sep 2:** Regular meeting at 6:30

pm. Speaker TBA. To be held at  
the offices of Scott Kuktavy, 1836  
S. Research Loop.

**Sep 16:** Lie and Tie (6:30 pm);  
Dry Creek Outfitters, 5420 E.  
Broadway, Suite 254. Call Eric at  
326-7847.

**Sep 23:** Board meeting at El  
Charro Restaurant - 6 pm -  
Speedway and Swan. Everyone is  
invited.

## CONSERVATION OFFICER REPORT

Our workweek was fairly successful; we pulled out approximately 5,000 crayfish from Burro creek. We had several tasty meals out of the invasive critters as well including omelettes, pasta dishes and salads. A volunteer from the Elk Society even shared some of his Wild Boar Sausage Marinara. thanks to all that volunteered.

We have upcoming workdays in August, September and October. Please check the website and sign up.

I'll be heading to my final TU National meeting in August as your AZ Council chair. I plan to step down in 2010. It's been an honor representing you all as Council chair. I will also be attending my last Native trout Committee meeting there and will share information about this when I return. As you might already know, Apache Trout are already listed in the CSI (Conservation Success

index and there are links to this and other Native trout on the TU website. I hope to see Gila trout on this list shortly. In recent news, the workgroup has been leading a frustrating effort to secure populations of Paiute Trout in Silver King Creek in California. A draft of an environmental analysis has been produced and hopefully the Paiute will be re-introduced shortly. A workgroup has started in Yellowstone to genetically analyze fin clippings of the Yellowstone cutthroats; it is believed there has been introgression of rainbow trout to the cutthroat population. I feel their pain as we have the same dealings on Apache Trout waters. I also discovered that Texas is going to have Native Trout. The TU Texas council is exploring the possibility of introducing Rio Grande Cutts into the Davis and Guadalupe mountains of SW Texas. this is part of the Rio Pecos drainage.

In more local news, the newly formed Gila Trout Chapter of Payson is working on getting Stimulus money for improvements to the East Verde River. It is hoped the Gila Trout will eventually be introduced into the headwaters of their precious stream. I visited this water about a month ago with chapter president Bob Youtz and can attest to this magnificent water. Other creeks in the area are being assessed for restoration including Dude, Haigler, Canyon, Christopher, East Verde and Spring Creek near Young. AZGFD is again looking at putting Gila Trout into Dude Creek and possibly Apache Trout in Spring Creek near Young.

*Jeff Collins, AZTU Council Chair*

At the center of TU's efforts to raise the profile of coldwater conservation is the **Grassroots Activist Network** - TU members who have volunteered to contact their members of Congress, Governors, members of state legislatures and natural resource agencies on issues of importance to trout and salmon.

Grassroots Activists receive brief summaries or Action Alerts of issues pending before government decision-makers that could harm or help coldwater fisheries, and guidance on how to be an effective voice for trout and salmon.



## DEDICATED TO RESTORING THE APACHE TROUT IN ARIZONA

The Old Pueblo Chapter has worked over the years to remove Apache Trout from the endangered species list and also is focusing on restoring the Gila Trout. We exist to promote wild fish and the joy of fishing.



## PROJECT HEALING WATERS



We had a great trip to Durango for the first (hopefully) annual Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing trip to the Southwest Colorado area. We had troops from the Warrior Transition Battalion at Fort Carson, Colorado, the Warrior Transition Unit at Fort Huachuca, Arizona and the Community Based Warrior Transition Unit, Utah. Volunteers from the Five Rivers Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Durango, Colorado, Cheyenne Mountain Chapter Trout Unlimited, Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Old Pueblo Chapter Trout Unlimited, Tucson, Arizona all provided indispensable help serving as fishing buddies

We had three days of fishing on waters as diverse as the small spring creek of the East Fork of Hermosa Creek, the larger remote waters of the Animas River and Cascade Creek at a place only reachable by train or a six mile hike and finally the tail waters of the San Juan River near Farmington, NM.

All the troops caught fish and enjoyed the opportunity to relax away from the pressures of frequent medical appointments and treatment. Many of the soldiers told us they gained a lot just by being able to do something new and challenging. At least one told his colleague that the trip was a godsend and helped him over an emotional rough patch.

The following businesses donated valuable services to the effort without which this endeavor would not have been possible: Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, Iron Horse Inn and JBo's Pizza and Ribs Company. Duranglers and the Caddis company of Durango and Dry Creek Outfitters of Tucson also provided valuable assistance, services and equipment.

The volunteer "fishing buddies" that were so important in the success of the trip were: Larry Narcus, Joe Fagen, John Singley, Mickey and Tim Fletcher, Clay Hernandez, and Steve Brown from Tucson; Ty Churchwell, Paul Sheppard, Don Oliver, Dale Smith, Sam Stites, Gordy Rothoff, Jerome

Gallegos and Leo Sanchez from Colorado. Buck Skillen's work at recruiting "fishing buddies" and acting as the Durango point of contact was essential. Last but not least was Roseann Marsett and her helpers: Heather and Scott Adams, Christian Zulueta, and Stacy Batesel, who provided lunches for over thirty people every day under trying conditions.

This trip was good for all of us, the troops and the volunteers. The fly fishing community has gained several new members.



## NOTES FROM THE FLYSHOP

### 2009 Dry Creek Trips

*July 9 – July 16: Pesca Maya Lodge*

Ascension Bay, Mexico. Sight fishing for Bonefish and Permit. All meals, alcohol, lodging and guide fees incl. \$2,468 pp/double occupancy. See ad on last page.

*July 31 – Aug 4: San Diego, CA*

Bowman Bluewater Guides. 2 days flyfishing for Mako Shark and 1 day sight fishing for Carp.

*September 5 – September 12 Kenai, Alaska*

Great Alaska Lodge. Flyfishing for Rainbow Trout, Dolly Varden, Steelhead and Silver (Coho) Salmon; \$4,395pp/double occupancy.

Call Eric at Dry Creek (326-7847) for information on all of the above. Thanks for your support!!

## WIN A HAT

As you know Trout Unlimited is a conservation organization dedicated to the protection and maintenance of our cold water fisheries in this country. Each month we offer one of our newly designed OPTU hats to the member submitting the best water saving tip for use in and around our homes. You can submit the tip to me by email at [czhernandez@comcast.net](mailto:czhernandez@comcast.net). The winner will be notified by email each month and announced in the next newsletter. The winner will receive their hat at the next monthly meeting.

## HELP ON PLACES TO FISH

Names and email addresses of OPTU members who have kindly agreed to share their fishing waters' knowledge with members who have not fished the particular waters before and are looking for advice is now available for downloading at the OPTU website at:

<http://optu.org/FISHING%20WATERS%20HELP.doc>. A good first lead about where and when to fish, or where to stay can make the trip easier and more enjoyable. The list is alphabetical by state and several foreign locations are also included. For advice about one of the areas or rivers on the list, get in touch with the named colleague by email and make arrangements to talk to them by phone.

Additionally, courtesy of OPTU flyfisher Don Maggert, there is a disc containing articles pulled from the Web about fly fishing some thirty well-regarded Western rivers (mostly in Colorado and Montana as well as a few from Idaho and Utah). Send me a name of the river and I will check to see if it is on Don's disc and if so, I will forward the write-up. *Stan Vanagunas* [vanagunas@msn.com](mailto:vanagunas@msn.com)

## My Favorite Recipe

***No one submitted. Send in your favorites.***

## Upcoming Fishing Trips

OPTU will likely develop plans for the following trips in **2009**: Family Outing, Fall Retirees Trip, and based upon interest one additional trip to either the San Juan or Lees Ferry. Don't forget there is fun fishing in southern Arizona's lakes. It's always a fun day of fishing with fellow OPTU members locally.

**2009 Retirees Trip** The retirees' trip this year will be Sep. 14 through Sep. 29. We are going to Redding California for two days fishing for rainbows on the Sacramento River through Redding, with guides and drift boats. We then will go up I-5 to Dunsmuir, California and stay there for 9 days fishing the Upper Sacramento River, the Hat, the McCloud River and the Klamath River near Oregon. Hopefully we'll get into some early Steelhead. Guides for the latter part of the trip are going to be optional and are not included in the cost estimate. The per person cost for the trip is estimated to be \$1500 which includes transportation, food, lodging and the guides for the Lower Sacramento River through Redding. The trip will be limited to 8 people, and there are currently 2 places left. You can reserve a slot with a deposit of \$500. If interested contact *John Singley* at 318-4791.

## Family OUTING

November 6 - 8, 2009  
Dead Horse State Park  
Verde River

We have reserved the campground at the State Park for this weekend. The river will be stocked, and life will go on for those of us that can no longer get into the White Mountains after the snow has started. It is a great area within a short drive of Sedona, Jerome, and even Flagstaff if you are so inclined. The park is near Cottonwood, Arizona, about halfway between Phoenix and Flagstaff. We are hoping to entice some of our new brethren from the Payson Chapter of Trout unlimited to join us. We should

have more information on our website in the months to come as we do with our workdays. I hope a lot of you will join us this weekend.  
*Clay Hernandez*

## FISHING REPORTS

See the report from the Healing Waters trip.

## OPTU FACEBOOK GROUP

I started an OPTU Facebook group. If you add it to your links in Facebook it will help make contacts with members. Joe DeVries  
[jrdaz@cox.net](mailto:jrdaz@cox.net)

### OPTU Board Meeting 6/29/09

El Charro Restaurant, Swan and Speedway  
The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by President Clay Hernandez.

#### Attending

Whitey Kuebler, Clay Hernandez, Steve Reiter, Roger McKee, Joe Fagan w/ Nurse Mary, Stan Vanagunas, Mike Mehrer

### I- OPTU Work Week (7-11 thru 7-19-09)

1- Board Members are requested to participate and are asked to advise Mike Mehrer by email <Mehrog2 @gainbroadband.com> dates of attendance by 7-6-09.

Mike will forward the list to the board on 7/7/09. The following is the list of board member commitments known (?) at this date

- Joe Fagan: 7-10 thru 7-20
- Jeff Collins: 7-11 thru 7-20?
- John Singley: 7-16 thru 7-20
- Clay Hernandez: 7-14 thru 7-20
- Roger McKee: 7-11 thru 7-19?
- Stan Vanagunas: TBD

#### 2- Tasks

Participants will capture Crayfish, Crawdads and Mudbugs, after a leisurely breakfast, from approximately 8:00AM until 1:00PM. Some will record data from stream temperature monitors. The rest of the day will be free.

### 3- Equipment and bait

Traps, nets and bait will be provided by Joe Fagan and Clay Hernandez. Members who have nets are asked to bring them. Square nets are best for critter capture. Since raw chicken parts are the preferred bait, anyone bringing chicken to cook for meals is asked to contribute to the bait pot. Whitey and Joe will bring buckets for crawdad collection. All participants are invited to bring 5 gal buckets.

### 4- Location:

Jeff and Clay will coordinate on the delivery of the Porta Potties. (The PPs may not arrive until Sunday) Joe will do his best to identify a group camping location with OPTU and AZF&G signage when he arrives on the 10th.

### 5- Meals:

OPTU will provide lunch fix'ins everyday. Any member/participant who would like to host a dinner is asked to advise Mike by email. Whitey noted that Springerville is close by which allows presumptive dinner hosts to drop by the town to pick-up fried chicken and/ or other delicacies thereby bypassing the need to cook-out. Jeff Collins has volunteered to do a crayfish/pasta meal Sunday night. Joe Fagan has NOT volunteered to eat a live mudbug this year to entertain the troops because he said they taste bad. The OPTU Grill will be available for OPTU participants. Breakfasts and dinners and beverages not otherwise provided will be the responsibility of individual participants.

### II- The Halloween Day Fishing Party

This is a "First Annual" event. Ed Engle, well known author, speaker and Colorado Fishing Guide will be the be our guest. He will provide a small-fly fly tying demo or a one hour demo of fly fishing casts and at 1:00PM will make a presentation. Among possible topics are

- Fly Fishing Western Tailwaters
- Nymphing: The Art Science and Mythology of Catching Trout Under the Water

Surface.

- A Fly Fisher's Life
- Catching Difficult Trout
- Fishing Rocky Mountain Small Streams

Location: Scott Kuktavy Inc. World Headquarters

Time: 10:00AM to 4:30PM

Activities: (tentative)

Casting demo and instruction

Knots: demo and instruction

Fly Tying: demo and instruction

Spin fishing for kids

Rod Building: demo and instruction

Fish identification

Food:

OPTU will provide hot dogs, hamburgers, and soft drinks.

Planning and Coordination:

The organizing committee for the event will be Mike Mehrer, Whitey Kuebler, Roger McKee and Stan Vanagunas.

III- Old Business

- John Singley sent a report that he is working on the new OPTU shirts. One new possibility is an insect resistant fabric.

IV- New Business

- Whitey reported that he has been contacted by the owner of several bass stocked ponds in the St. David area who is interested in making them available to the Healing waters project. The owner will want a release form for the purpose. Clay, our legal eagle will look into this.

- Joe reported that the AZF&G Cluff Ranch location, with ponds, cabins and camping facilities would be available for OPTU events. One possibility would be the 2010 family outing.

With no other business to conduct Clay Hernandez adjourned the meeting at 7:10PM.  
Respectfully submitted by Mike Mehrer,  
Secretary

