



Guadalupe River Chapter of Trout Unlimited

# Newsletter



No. 91 October 2009

Publication Data on Pg. 16

## GRTU Meeting

Saturday, October 24th

Jellystone Park  
12915 FM 306  
Canyon Lake, TX  
Directions on pages 2-3

9 AM - Lease Access  
Orientation & Social Hour  
10 AM - Business Mtg

11 AM - "Fly Fishing Alaska on  
Any Budget" with Brian  
O'Keefe

12 - Raffle & Lunch  
12:30 PM - Lease Access  
Orientation  
1 PM GRTU Board Meeting

## Fly Fishing Adventurer and Photographer Brian O'Keefe to Speak at October Chapter Meeting

Football season is underway, daytime temperatures are below 100F, and rain is finally falling again in the Guadalupe River basin. All are sure signs that it will soon be time for another outstanding season of trout fishing in Texas.

Coinciding with the shortening of days and coming of fall, our first general meeting of the new season is set for October 24th at Jellystone Park at 12915 FM 306 in Canyon Lake at 10 AM.

One of the reasons often cited to fly fish is the sheer beauty of the locations where trout live. Many of us have lived vicariously through photos and videos of such places. They spark our imaginations and fan the flames of our passion for protecting and fishing for these marvelous creatures. In recognition of this vital link between the beauty of nature and our sport, we are very excited to have noted fly-fishing photographer Brian O'Keefe as our guest speaker for this meeting. The topic of his presentation is "Fly Fishing Alaska on Any Budget."

Brian O'Keefe has been a serious fly fisher for the past 40 years. He developed an interest while

spending summers in Montana with his grandparents. There, he was taught the art of fly casting and fishing by a Montana dry fly purist, his grandfather, Fred Johnson.

Brian began fishing the world in 1973. Just out of high school, Brian began his adventures with a solo trip through New Zealand and Australia, and a trek into the Himalayan Mountains to fish for brown trout in Kashmir. After returning from this two-year adventure, he began guiding in the Northwest and Alaska for trout, salmon and steelhead. At age 30,



October speaker Brian O'Keefe

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Brian began a 21 year career as a fly fishing tackle rep.

As a fly fishing photographer, Brian started publishing photos while in high school in the early 70's and continues to contribute to publications on a weekly basis. He is also an accomplished fly casting instructor, earning the title of Master Certified Fly Casting Instructor from the Federation of Fly Fishers. Brian has also placed in, and won many fly casting competitions.

Brian has traveled to some of the wildest and most remote angling destinations in the world, including: Bikini Atoll, the Seychelles, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Tonga and Kashmir. He has also traveled to more accessible locations, such as: the Bahamas, Belize, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Chile, New Zealand, Christmas Island and more. In many of these locations he again chose to venture off the beaten path, hiking, floating, sea-kayaking or taking a Zodiac into the backcountry. Inside our borders, Brian has specialized in fly fishing the Northern Rockies, the Northwest and Alaska. A camera goes on every trip to record the action.

Brian lives in Powell Butte, Oregon and continues to work as an angling and outdoor photographer, having had photographs published in: *Cabela's Outfitter Journal*, *Field & Stream*; *Outdoor Life*; *Fly Fisherman*; *Fly, Rod and Reel*; *Fly Fishing Salt Waters*; *Northwest Flyfishing*; *Fish Alaska*; *Fish & Fly Magazine*;

*Outside Magazine*; *Men's Journal* and many others.

Brian is also the photo editor of the online fly fishing magazine called *Catch Magazine* – [www.catchmagazine.net](http://www.catchmagazine.net). Brian's fly club presentations are legendary. With beautiful photography and an easy going and at times, funny style, Brian takes anglers on visual trips to local destinations and around the world.

When not wading a flat or shooting photos in Alaska, Brian might be found in his huge vegetable garden, or doing tractor work on his small farm, which goats, chickens, and turkeys also call home.

We are pleased to welcome Brian back to Texas and to have him kick off our 2009-2010 season. Please join us at Jellystone Park in Canyon Lake at 10 AM on October 24th to hear him and see his gorgeous photos of Alaskan fly fishing.

### **Season Raffles Include Kodiak Raft Package**

We will have two chapter-sponsored raffles this season, one at the January meeting and one at the April meeting. Our January raffle will include an 8.5 ft 6wt fly rod and reel combo from LL Bean, an Umpqua fly tying kit, and a Redington 5/6 reel.

### **Directions to October Meeting Site**

We will be back at our fall venue for our next chapter meeting on October 25<sup>th</sup>. It will be held at the Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park Hill Country on FM 306 in Canyon Lake. Some may know it by its old name, the Maricopa Ranch Resort. For those familiar with the river, it's between the two FM 306 bridges across the Guadalupe, on the south side of the road.

There are several ways to get exact directions. One is to visit Jellystone Park Hill Country's website at [www.jellystonehillcountry.com](http://www.jellystonehillcountry.com). Another is to use Mapquest or Google Earth or a similar website and type in the address, which is 12915 FM 306, Canyon Lake, TX 78133. The Park is 13 miles northwest of exit 191 off I-35 and 13 miles southeast of the Hwy 281-FM 306 intersection. For those who like to use their GPS, it's at 29° 51' 58.87" N and 98° 10' 27.35" W.

In April, we'll raffle off a Water Master Kodiak Raft Package with a retail price of \$1395. The package includes the boat, a pair of standard breakdown oars, soft seat, foot pump, patch kit, and the boat bag (a seven cubic foot dry bag backpack) it all fits into. For more information on the raft, go to [shop.bigskyninflatables.com](http://shop.bigskyninflatables.com).

## GRTU Membership Reminder by Steve Stilp, VP of Membership

Our GRTU 2009-2010 **Lease Access Program** provides many access points on the river and is effective November 1<sup>st</sup> 2009 through October 31, 2010. Several of these access points are annual, meaning you have fishing access to the river year round.

**Members can sign up their children** (ages 10-17) **at no additional cost.** What a wonderful opportunity to spend time with your children on the river.

We will be stocking the river as soon as the water cools to an

acceptable level and continue to stock the river over the year. As a **Lease Access Member**, you will be notified via e-mail when the stockings take place. You'll also hear about other activities including membership meetings, where your family and friends are welcome to attend. Additionally, you will have access to our private online "**Forum**" where you can ask questions and get answers.

To join go to: [www.grtu.org](http://www.grtu.org) and click on **Membership**. Our site accepts credit cards.

You can also renew your National TU Membership on our [www.grtu.org](http://www.grtu.org) website.

If you have questions click on **CONTACTS** and e-mail or call your Area Representative.

- Our mission: Conserve, Protect and Restore coldwater trout fisheries
- Three General Meetings per year
- Hands-on trout stocking
- River conservation projects
- Community education programs that include women and children
- Work with local and state governments on environmental and conservation issues

Check out our website for further information: [www.grtu.org](http://www.grtu.org)



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## A Visit to Pebble Mine

by Mick McCorcle  
TU Board of Trustees

Fog was just beginning to burn off of Lake Iliamna as our Cessna 180 floatplane passed over the lake's southwestern shore, headed to a broad saddle of land near Sharp Mountain, a short distance inland from the lake's north shore. It was early September and southwestern Alaska was already showing signs of fall, with the heather below turning gorgeous shades of yellow, red, and deep purple. The land around this giant (1000 square mile) lake was dotted with lakes and ponds of varying sizes, woven together by numerous rivers and creeks. If we looked closely, we could see the bright red backs of spawning sockeye salmon far below.

Local lodge owner and pilot Brian Kraft was taking Jeff Schmitt and me on an air, water, and land-based tour of the proposed Pebble Mine site. We'd heard and read much about this vast undertaking, and today we were going to get to see it with our own eyes. As someone who'd grown up in the "Show Me" state of Missouri, it was just what I needed to get a clear, first-hand picture of the mine and its potential impacts. I was thankful that Jeff had been able to arrange our visit, and that Brian was willing to take time from his busy schedule to host it.

Jeff and I had spent the week fishing a few miles downstream from Lake Iliamna on the Kvichak River, the main outlet from the lake to Bristol Bay. We had targeted the large rainbow trout that inhabit the Lake, but drop down into the river in late summer and early fall to feed on eggs and flesh behind the spawning sockeye and chum salmon that were now in the river. Since the Kvichak hosts the largest run of sockeye in the world, it has become a mecca for commercial and sport fishers from all over the world. But the river, the lake, the sockeye, and the wonderful fishing are all threatened by the spectre of the mine.

Northern Dynasty Mines, Inc. (NDM), a British-Canadian joint venture, has proposed to mine a large metallic sulfide deposit at the headwaters of some of these streams. The mine application, filed in 2006, calls for a mine with a life span of 40 to 50 years. Their intent is to dig an open pit to retrieve deposits of gold, copper, and molybdenum now imbedded in quartz below the Alaskan tundra. In order to service that mine, they would also build a 700 foot dam, two large tailing ponds, a 104 mile long access road, a power line, a water line, and a slurry line from the mine down to Bristol Bay. According to William Hauser, an Alaska fisheries biologist who has studied the mine application, "the proposed project will leave permanent landscape features affecting some thirty square miles, including two tailing ponds that will house billions of tons of mine tailings which include toxic materials."



**Texas NLC Rep Jeff Schmitt and Alaskan lodge owner and bush pilot Brian Kraft after landing on Frying Pan Lake at the proposed Pebble Mine site.**

As Jeff and I prepared for our tour of the mine site, Brian gave us a quick overview of what has been proposed by NDM. "Preliminary findings suggest that this is a pretty low grade deposit," he said. "In order to retrieve the metallic ores, they will have to dig them out of the ground, then crush them into microscopic particles and mix them with water, creating a slurry about the consistency of a milkshake. The metals will then be leached from that slurry with cyanide and the waste will be stored in the tailing ponds."

Brian nosed the plane downward as we approached the north shore of Lake Iliamna and we could clearly see the schools of spawning sockeye in a stretch of Lower Talarik Creek known as "The Ditch." The Creek cut a sinuous, zigzag pattern across the landscape as it flowed through forest and tundra from its headwaters to the lake. Ahead, we saw the first signs of activity at the mine – preliminary drilling sites perched on the hills and a large, cleared pad of land, maybe 50 acres in size, that was the headquarters for the mining operation. From the air, it looked more like a junkyard or an industrial storage facility than anything else. Brian brought the plane in to land at Frying Pan Lake, a small body of water in the middle of the site.

If Pebble Mine is not in the middle of nowhere, it's certainly just a few miles from there. It's currently accessible only by air, and so a whole new infrastructure of power, water, and land access would need to be created for the mine to function effectively. For now, the primary means of transportation is by helicopter. As we toured the area, the helicopters buzzed continuously overhead, carrying baskets of supplies and equipment to the drilling sites. Elsewhere, workers were busy clear-cutting several parallel strips of land 20 feet wide and 1300 meters long, so wires could be laid to "shock the ground" and obtain readings that would tell them where the richest deposits of ore were located.

While fishing the Kvichak, Jeff and I had the opportunity to meet a young man who typified the dilemma that Alaskans face with the mine. Joshua (not his real name), moved from the lower 48 to Alaska four years ago, hoping to start a lodge or fishing operation. Now just 23, he was recently married to

a local girl and they are expecting their first child. And while Josh still dreams of running a fishing lodge and believes that “the mine has to be stopped,” he recently took a job with NDM, helping to clear timber for the shock tests.

How will all this activity affect the local flora and fauna? Well, for starters, NDM proposes to fully or partially dewater about 60 lineal miles of mainstem streams – plus the adjacent tributaries and wetlands. These streams, like Upper and Lower Talarik Creek and the headwaters of the Koktuli River, are now prime sockeye and Chinook salmon breeding grounds. Their proposed access road will affect another 12.5 square miles of land and may require as many as 120 stream crossings along its 104 mile course.

Since the water table now lies just 12 feet below the surface of the tundra it can be easily altered or contaminated by mining and infrastructure building. “Over time,” wrote Hauser, “bridges and culverts for the access road can deteriorate and interfere with juvenile or adult fish migration between important habitats, while leakage in the slurry line could smother fish food, fish eggs, and wash downstream to affect spawning and rearing habitat in Lake Iliamna.”

It is predicted that the mine could reduce the sockeye and Chinook breeding areas by 10%, so there is the potential for cumulative, multi-year losses of fish production and stream productivity. The Bristol Bay salmon fishery contributes



**Portion of Upper Talarik Creek near the Pebble Mine site that is proposed for “dewatering.”**

about 32% of the total value of salmon harvested each year in Alaska, the largest in the state. Sockeye salmon comprise about 90% of the Bristol Bay harvest, and about 56% of the statewide sockeye harvest. Annual impacts on the commercial and sport fisheries are estimated at \$300 million.

NDM spokesmen have repeatedly assured that the mine would cause “no net loss” of habitat for any of Alaska’s fish or other wildlife and that the plan for the mine would be completely safe and fault proof. Hauser claims, however, that “the environmental record of metallic sulfide mines, particularly where the ore body is at groundwater, as it is at the Pebble Mine site, is poor. One study of recently-permitted large mines in the US found that 85% of these sulfide-based mines polluted surface water, 93% polluted ground water, and of those that developed acid mine drainage, 89% of their original environmental documents predicted that they would produce no pollution.”

But for local Alaskans like Josh, the choice is not an easy one. The state and its citizens have prospered for years from the subsidies earned from oil and mineral leases. NDM has brought rosy predictions about the mine’s potential and its impact on the Alaskan economy. Since the proposed mine is on state land, NDM won a state referendum on the mine by promising lots of high paying jobs and a boost to the faltering economy. And NDM has made it a policy to hire local labor (like Josh) whenever possible.

For Josh and his family, the economics were overwhelming. NDM pays laborers \$30 an hour to clear timber. They also pay them for their travel time to and from the mine (by helicopter), and pay them time-and-a-half for overtime. Since Josh’s usual work week is 95 hours, and he can work up to four weeks straight without a break, he can earn over \$11,000 a month. With training and experience, he could become a driller, and the pay would be 50% higher. That’s hard to turn down in any economy, and especially so in the wilderness of Alaska, with a growing family to feed.

But as Brian Kraft was quick to remind us, “these are ‘forever decisions.’ They don’t just affect those of us who live and work and fish here now, they will affect our children and our grandchildren. Once the mine is dug, and the road and tailing pools are built, they will be with us forever. And someone will have to be monitoring and maintaining them, because their threat to the environment and the fishery will not just go away.”

So what can we do? Well, the GRTU Board, through our Coldwater Outreach Conservation Fund, has already authorized a \$3000 contribution to Trout Unlimited’s efforts to fight Pebble Mine. If you’d like to do more, go to the TU website at [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org) and see how you can help protect Bristol Bay and its wonderful fishery.

## President's Message

I hope this message finds you and your families in good health. Now that the summer holiday season is over and our lives are back to their normal routines, we can now focus on the fishing season. We have a very exciting season ahead. Unfortunately, we still have not gotten sufficient rain in the watershed, so flows are very low. But if we look back at last year at this time, the flows are very much the same.

Guadalupe River still has some holdover trout. I have had reports that trout have been caught by campers as far downstream as just above the Chute. Of course they were caught on bait, on or near the bottom. While I'm glad to know we still have trout in the river, I'm concerned about trout being harvested in a catch and release area when holdovers are struggling.

As of this writing, the trout stocking plans are much the same as previous years. We will generally start stocking when the water temperatures get consistently below 70 degrees, which usually occurs in late October to the first part of November. We will send out a notice to our lease holders as we get closer to that trigger.

We have a great meeting scheduled for October with speaker Brian O'Keefe. (See the article about Brian in the front of the newsletter.) We will have updates about the trout telemetry study. Last October the board voted to conduct a study in conjunction with Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD). In laymen's terms, GRTU purchased transmitters which were surgically implanted in a sample set of trout. The fish were then released into the river. At regular intervals, the fish were be tracked electronically. Movement patterns will help us understand where the trout go after stocking, and throughout the season.

We recently presented a proposal to the US Army Corps of Engineers for a joint project with TPWD, GRTU, and the USACE on in-stream and bank restoration of sections of the Guadalupe Tailrace. As of this writing we do not have a final answer, but things look really promising for the first stage.

We also have plans to have two Project Healing Water events this year. Last year's event was very successful and got lots of great feedback from the Vets. We will be looking for volunteers as we begin to firm up the dates and times for the events. Jeff Schmitt reports on developments in our PHW project elsewhere in this newsletter.

I know this sounds like a broken record, but we are still looking for additional help with Trout in the Classroom. We need people to help talk with local school systems and parent teacher organizations in San Antonio and Austin to spread the word about this great program. Our goal is to have at least nine classrooms with fish tanks. We need your help!

Bill Higdon  
GRTU Chapter President



## Fall Fisheries Report

Even though the river flows in the Guadalupe were low this past season, they were consistent flows. We had lots of huge Trout, great leases, lots of bugs and hatches, crystal clear water, and increased regulation enforcement. Last season was a great one, a season to remember.

This year is stacking up to be a carbon copy. The insects are abundant; we have reports trout are holding over, more big trout are scheduled, the aquatic plants are getting better every year, there has been much less poaching this summer by campers, all conducive for another great season.

We are finally getting some much needed rain and the forecast looks good for more, (Jimbo, keep beating those rain drums). Everything is coming together again for awesome season. Get your 2009-10 lease pass and get in on the action.

I always start getting lots of phone calls this time of year regarding the fishery, and what can be expected

in the upcoming season. This is a repeat of the most common Questions and Answers:

Q. When are we going to stock? (The most frequently asked)

A. It all depends on the water temperature. When the temperature is consistently below 70 degrees, we will begin to look at stocking dates. This usually occurs in late October to late November.

Q. What size trout will be stocked?

A. We generally stock 1 to 1 ½ pounds with a few bigger and some a little smaller. The past couple of seasons, we have been requesting larger trout, 2 ½ lbs plus. We have found the larger trout are much more robust and hold-over better than the smaller trout. We will be stocking the larger trout again this season. Last season, we had some trout of five pounds or more come off the stocking truck.

Q. Will we stock any brown trout?

A. We have found over the years, the brown trout do not do well in the Guadalupe, so we no longer stock brown trout. Although, some times a few will in find their way into the stocking truck on occasion.

Q. How many leases will we have this season?

A. The number of leases is usually between 15 and 18. We are still arranging the leases as of this newsletter but the majority will be the same.

Q. Is the water too hot for the trout?

A. As quoted on the GRTU website: *What are the best water temperatures for trout?*

Ideally 57 - 62 degrees. Good temperatures are below 68 degrees. It is widely accepted

by the biologists that temperatures for mortality are 74 to 82 degrees. It doesn't mean that trout will die in 74 degree water, but their condition could make them susceptible to disease and predators if the temperature remains high. And catching and playing a trout in this range could be fatal to the trout, even if it appears to swim away normally. The water temperature will fluctuate in a 24 hour cycle and usually the water temperature is highest in the late afternoon. The daily average water temperature is also important indicator of the conditions in the trout fishery. Trout biologists believe that the average temperature should be below 72 degrees. I look forward to seeing everyone at the October meeting. Bill Higdon, VP of Fisheries

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## Project Healing Waters

by Jeff Schmitt

GRTU's Project Healing Waters (PHW) program helps some of our wounded American service men and women, primarily those at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, with physical and emotional rehabilitation by teaching them the skills of fly fishing.

Last spring, GRTU's PHW program held a very successful fishing event for five wounded warriors at Bill Higdon's Guadalupe River Lodge. All of our soldiers caught trout and we had a great time getting to know them and watching them enjoy a beautiful spring day on the river.

At the end of that day of fishing, we sat on Bill's porch, about eight of us who had volunteered for the day and five American heroes, and listened to one of them, Diane Cochran, tell us what PHW had meant to her. Diane spent her career in the military, serving several tours overseas, some of them combat duty, until her vehicle was blown off the road and rolled down a ravine in Afghanistan. Diane was sent to Walter Reed Hospital to recover and rehabilitate her broken body. It was amazing to listen to her tell you how much it meant to

her to learn to tie flies during the two years, eleven months and seventeen days it took her get out of Walter Reed. (Not that she was counting) It helped her eye-hand motor skills, it helped her gain strength again in her damaged muscles, it gave her something to do when there was lots of time to pass and it helped her build anticipation for the next trip to the river. Diane's in San Antonio now and came to fish with us last spring. She'll be at the meeting in October to talk to us about PHW.

That's the type of PHW I hope to lead GRTU to develop at Brooke Army Medical Center. Not just a "take a soldier fishing" program, although we are going to take some soldiers fishing, but a regular on-base program at Brooke that teaches the skills of fly fishing: fly tying, fly casting and fly fishing...as well as holding fishing events.

Also at the spring event, we met Scott Lathan. Scott was also a career soldier, a medic for first strike infantry units. Scott also served several tours in two different wars until an explosion in Iraq changed his life. Scott recently relocated to Texas and he sought out Project Healing Waters, not only because he wanted somebody to teach him to fly fish and wanted to go fishing, but he also wanted to

help some of the other wounded soldiers that were coming back and wanted to learn to fish.

We were so impressed with Scott's spirit and his natural abilities to fly fish that we were able to get him invited as a representative of GRTU's PHW program to a national PHW trip to Alaska. GRTU members contributed to paying Scott's airfare and got him some cold/wet weather equipment and sent him to Ketchikan, Alaska, where he spent 10 days sailing with Garry Morfit on a 45 foot trawler "The Hot Ruddered Bum" while fly fishing the rivers and lakes along the Alaska coast from Ketchikan to Sitka. Scott will also be at the October GRTU meeting to thank



**Project Healing Waters participant Scott Lathan with pink salmon in Alaska.**



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GRTU members for supporting his trip and to tell his PHW story.

And, a special thanks to Sportsman's Finest, who helped Scott get the Simms wading jacket he needed to face those cold, wet Alaska fishing conditions and Temple Fork who helped us get Scott his first rod. Ted Mendrek and Banning Collins spent some hands on time with Scott getting him ready for the adventure. And then Tosh Brown called and told us they wanted to make a donation from the funds raised at the Drake Fly Fishing Film Festival held in Austin last spring. We couldn't make things like this happen for a soldier like Scott without such fine local and industry support.

So, that's a bit about what we've done and where I'd like to see us go. We'll definitely have a couple PHW fishing events this season and we'll need both some donations and a few volunteers to pay for them. I'd appreciate a PHW donation along with your lease access membership.

But, more than anything, I really want to see GRTU put together the on-base program at BAMC, that will teach fly tying and fly casting classes on a weekly basis. To do that, I need San Antonio based volunteers to coordinate the program and participate in teaching the classes. I need people who have time during weekday afternoons, maybe one day a month, to be on a list of people who could be called on to insure that we have a regular, dependable presence at BAMC on the same day/time every week. That's what made the program at Walter Reed so successful and that's what's been key to the other truly successful PHW programs around the country. I want to see GRTU put together a program like that for our wounded service men and women at BAMC.

If you want to volunteer, please contact me at [SchmittJ@grtu.org](mailto:SchmittJ@grtu.org)



**Project Healing Waters participant Scott Lathan (second from left) displays his new fly rod from Temple Fork Outfitters and Simms wading jacket from Sportsman's Finest. Joining Scott in the picture are (from left) TFO Rep Banning Collins, Scott's son, Miles, and Sportsman's Finest manager and GRTU Board Member Ted Mendrek.**



## Leadership Changes Mark New Season for GRTU

Elections at the GRTU chapter meeting in April and others at the Trout Unlimited National meeting in August have changed the lineup of leaders in our local, state, and national organization. Rather than force you to figure them out for yourselves, we decided to introduce (or re-introduce) you to some of the newer people (and faces) you'll be seeing more of over the next few weeks and months as you involve yourselves in Trout Unlimited.

Our chapter by-laws set a term limit on the office of chapter president. No one can be elected for more than one two year term. After the good services of Greg Neubauer for two years in that role, Bill Higdon was elected president at the April chapter meeting. Bill is no stranger to GRTU, having been a member for over a decade and an officer for the last five years, serving as VP of Fisheries.



**President Bill Higdon rows Membership Rep Roger Turner down the river (Ray Sasser Photo).**

Bill came to Texas from Tennessee and worked for several years as a business analysis manager at Dell before retiring to pursue his dream of guiding fly fishers on the Hill Country's rivers. Bill lives on the Guadalupe, just downstream from the Little Ponderosa Bridge, and runs In the Hills Fishing Excursions from Guadalupe River Lodge. Bill will continue to fill the role of VP of Fisheries, managing our lease access and trout stocking program. In addition, Bill has played an active role in the GRTU Restoration Committee and the Project Healing Waters program. During his term as president, Bill will also serve as the chair of the Texas Council of TU.

Mark Dillow is our new VP of Chapter Affairs. The VP of Chapter Affairs manages our chapter meetings, the chapter store, and any raffles, auctions, or door prizes associated with them. He's responsible for helping us obtain speakers for our meetings and arranging for the meeting space we need to hold those meetings. He even gets to figure out who will cater the lunches we usually serve at the meetings. In other words, it's a challenging and often thankless task.



**VP Mark Dillow**

Chris Johnson will be replacing Mark as the Austin/Central Texas Area Membership Representative.

Mark was introduced to fly fishing by his father as a young boy at his grandparent's farm pond. He still has the fiberglass South Bend rod (which he refurbished last year) and automatic reel used in his first lesson. He took up fly fishing seriously eleven years ago, and "discovered" GRTU from an article in Texas Parks and Wildlife magazine featuring past president Scott Graham. Mark participates in river cleanups and stockings, and served as the Austin/Central Texas area representative of GRTU last year, introducing many members to our lease access program. Mark has been an employee of Dell Inc. for 21 years, and currently is an enterprise customer quality manager. Mark and wife Tammy share their love of fishing and the outdoors with their five children and a yellow Labrador Retriever.

Stepping in for his first three year term as a Director of GRTU is Rafael Torres of Austin. Rafael is a retired firefighter who has been active in representing his fellow firefighters with the legislature and state agencies in our state's capitol. Rafael's been fly fishing since 1976. While employed by the El Paso Fire Department, he spent most of his free time helping with Boy Scouts in El Paso and New Mexico. He's worked on numerous conservation projects in the Lincoln, Gila and Pecos National Forests, including trail building and water



**Director Rafael Torres**

conservation efforts with the District Rangers. In Northern New Mexico, he helped on conservation projects at Philmont Scout Ranch and in the Valle Vidal.

Regarding his work with GRTU, Rafael said: "I enjoy being able to be more involved as TU member. Being involved with GRTU since 2004, I have had many great days working with other GRTU members on clean ups and stockings. Just sitting and listening to the history of our chapter, learning of the fights that took place to help protect the beautiful river our chapter is named after is a great reminder of how much work it takes to protect the thing we love. I hope to serve the members by remaining an active members and furthering the TU mission statement by my personal actions here at home and on my travels. Someone did it for me, now it is my turn to step up to the plate with my time and effort. Thanks to everyone that has made me feel welcome in this great chapter."

For the last five years, our state and chapter have been represented at the national level of Trout Unlimited by a National Leadership Council (NLC) Representative. The NLC, with representatives from each TU Council, sets the national conservation policy of Trout Unlimited and represents the "grassroots" (TU chapters and their members) on issues of importance at the national level. Texas was fortunate to have Jeff Schmitt, a GRTU past president, as our initial NLC Rep. Jeff represented us well and, while in that role, originated the GRTU Coldwater Outreach Conservation Fund, a fund that provides seed money to assist with coldwater conservation projects outside the state of Texas. Thus far, the COCF has funded efforts in Minnesota, New Mexico, Colorado, and Alaska, with a likely next project in SE Oklahoma. It's a program that has earned GRTU enormous good will at the regional and national level, while also helping to improve fisheries often used by my Texas fishers.

After a two year hiatus, Jeff has agreed to return as our NLC Rep. In addition to his leadership of river cleanups and other programs in GRTU, Jeff has recently spearheaded our



**Texas NLC Rep Jeff Schmitt**

Project Healing Waters program (see his article on PHW elsewhere in this newsletter). Jeff is not only a passionate coldwater conservationist but an extremely experienced coldwater fly fisher, having fished extensively on most of the major river systems in the Western United States and Alaska. An acoustical engineer by training, Jeff spends his non-fishing hours as an acoustical consultant to such wide-ranging clients as NASA and Kimberly-Clark.

At the national level, Trout Unlimited is governed by a Board of Trustees made up of ten "grassroots" trustees, elected to represent a cross-section of TU's states, councils, and chapters across the country, and 22 "at large" trustees, chosen primarily for their expertise in running businesses and non-profits or for their ability to raise funding. At the TU Annual Meeting in Michigan in August, GRTU member Mick McCorcle was elected to serve his first two year term as a Grassroots member of the Board of Trustees.



**Grassroots Trustee Mick McCorcle**

Mick has been active in TU since 1997, when he joined GRTU. He has served as President of GRTU and of the Lee Wulff chapter of TU in suburban Chicago, and most recently as the Texas NLC Rep. Mick also edits the GRTU newsletter. A retired psychologist, Mick now devotes full time to Trout Unlimited activities at the local, state, and national levels. He also represents the coldwater conservation and fly fishing communities on the Texas Parks and Wildlife's Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Board. An avid fly fisher and fly tyer, Mick enjoys serving as a river helper and fund raiser for Casting for Recovery.

If you are interested in getting more involved in Trout Unlimited at the chapter, state, or national levels, please do one of the following: (1) contact a GRTU board member (see list on page 14); (2) sign up as a volunteer at our chapter website, [www.grtu.org](http://www.grtu.org), by clicking on "Volunteer" on the home page; or (3) go to [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org) to check on volunteer opportunities at the national level.

## Habitat Restoration is Underway

by Gary Cobb,  
Conservation Chair

GRTU's habitat restoration efforts are officially underway. In September, GRTU submitted a proposal to the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to complete restoration efforts at two locations near Canyon Dam. The proposal was submitted to the Corps for approval because the initial activities include work on land owned or managed by the Corps.

As most of us recall, a major flood occurred on the Guadalupe and Canyon Lake in July 2002. During the first week of July, the area received over 35 inches of rain, rapidly filling the lake. According to local records, the lake rose 40 feet in four days. As a result of this heavy rain, water ultimately began flowing over the emergency spillway to the south of Canyon Dam, carving a deep gorge through virgin forest and down to bedrock as it raced to join the river, carrying a tremendous amount of sediment with it. At peak flow during the flood, the flow rate in the river was estimated at approximately 70,000 cubic feet per second (cfs).

Besides scouring a deep gorge from the emergency spillway to the river, the flood affected the aquatic habitat of the river in many ways.

- The river has become wider and shallower in many places, resulting in

increased water temperature.

- A large scour area was formed at the confluence of the gorge and the river, eroding the river banks and washing away the large trees which shaded the river.
- A tremendous volume of sediments was washed into the river at the gorge area, filling some deep pools such as the one below Horseshoe Falls.
- In-stream vegetation beneficial to the macro-invertebrate population within the river was washed away, removing a vital food source for aquatic animals.
- Riparian vegetation was lost in many areas leading to subsequent bank erosion.

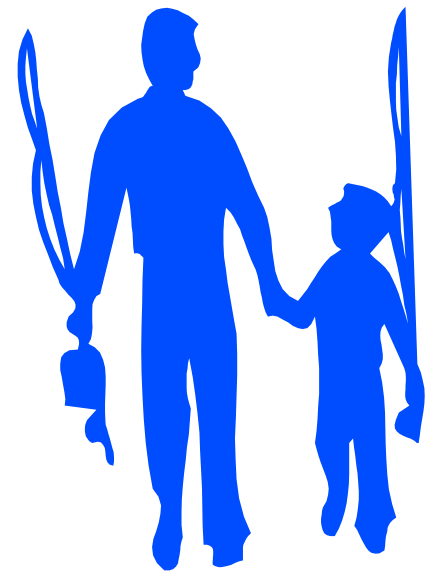
In the seven years since the flood, many of these effects have been further compounded. The river remains wide and shallow in many areas creating an unfavorable temperature profile.

Recovery of riparian areas scoured during the flood has been slow in some areas, resulting in increased bank erosion and further loss of riparian habitat. The presence of unstable banks and loss of river-bank vegetation has removed the in-stream habitat for aquatic organisms which benefit from cover provided by under-cut banks and stream-bank vegetation. In-stream habitats were also damaged by the loss of

cover structures (rocks, boulders, and logs) that were either washed away during the high flows or removed during the subsequent river cleanup.

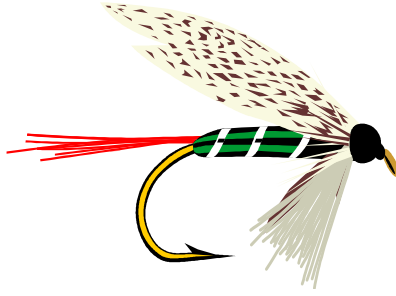
GRTU's Habitat Restoration Committee worked with TPWD to select two areas for our pilot restoration efforts; one riparian and one in-stream. These two sites were selected based on need, relative ease of restoration, and lower costs for restoration. In addition, GRTU will be able to use the results of these pilot studies to develop plans for other areas still in need of restoration.

Stay tuned for further developments – we may need some volunteer assistance with these projects.



## Entomology for Fly Fishers

Guadalupe River, Canyon Lake, TX  
October 31 & November 1, 2009



Rob Woodruff of Woodruff Guide Service will be returning this year to offer his Entomology for Fly Fishers course, on October 31 & November 1, 2009 at Rio Raft Outfitters in Canyon Lake, TX. Rob's course was well received last fall by GRTU members.

Entomology for Fly Fishers is a course designed for all fly fishers. The course gives an overview of the arthropods, both aquatic and terrestrial, that are important to the

fly angler. Warmwater and coldwater environments are included. Topics covered include sampling techniques, identification of both larval and adult stages, and simple biology of the species. The ultimate goal of the class is for the angler to develop the ability to equate in-the-field observation to fly selection and construction in order to achieve success.

The class consists of six hours of lecture and demonstration on Saturday, as well as a half-day field trip on the Guadalupe on Sunday. While on the river, students will participate in the collection and evaluation of insect samples and receive instruction on fly selection.

Class size is limited. Advance registration is required.

Guadalupe River, TX, in conjunction with GRTU. October 31 & November 1, 2009. Course fee is \$65.00. Registration deadline is October 27, 2009. To register, contact Rob Woodruff, either by Email at [wgsflyfish@aol.com](mailto:wgsflyfish@aol.com) or at (903) 967-2665.

## The Guadalupe River Chapter of Trout Unlimited

### Honorary Life Members

The following distinguished members of GRTU have been designated, some posthumously, as Honorary Life Members of the Chapter for their exceptional contributions to our work. This honor is reserved for commendatory recognition of individuals whose personal service contributions to the Chapter are deemed to have had outstanding impact in advancing Chapter and TU objectives.

Clement W Bird  
Alan Bray  
Bill Cobb  
Dick Finta  
Rupert Gresham  
Howard Itten  
William A. (Bill) Johnson  
James W Keeton  
Bob Newman

Chad Oliver  
Irving O'Neal  
William C. (Bill) Pabst  
J. Bill Parvin  
Basden L. (Bud) Priddy, MD  
Glenn Richardson  
Jeff Schmitt  
David Schroeder  
Mrs. Hazel Schubauer

Lt. Col. Paul A. Schubauer (Ret.)  
Betsy Story  
Bob Story  
Marian Tilson  
Billy Trimble  
R.E. (Bob) Tuttle  
Jim Vynalek  
William G. (Bill) West  
T.B. (Tom) Whitehouse



## The Guadalupe River Chapter of Trout Unlimited 2009-2010



### GRTU Officers and Board of Directors

President	Bill Higdon	830-964-5565	President@grtu.org
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Director	Rafael Torres	512-560-4380	TorresR@grtu.org

### Regional Representatives

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Dallas/North Texas	Roger Turner	214-475-1551	TurnerR@grtu.org
Houston/East Texas	Gary Burns	713-249-7764	BurnsG@grtu.org
New Braunfels	Tiffany Fluitt	830-625-4440	FluittT@grtu.org
San Antonio/West Texas	Karen Gebhardt	830-980-7580	GebhardtK@grtu.org

### Other Positions

Newsletter Editor	Mick McCorcle	972-569-9134	news@grtu.org
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Webmaster	David Schroeder	512-996-8283	SchroederD@grtu.org
Conservation Chair	Gary Cobb	512-719-6011	CobbG@grtu.org
NLC Representative	Jeff Schmitt	512-282-6016	SchmittJ@grtu.org
Education Chair	Karen Gebhardt	830-980-7580	GebhardtK@grtu.org

## GRTU Winter Meeting

January 24, 2010

Special Guest Speaker:

**Landon Mayer**

“How to Catch The Biggest  
Trout of Your Life”

Find out more about Landon at [www.landonmayer.com](http://www.landonmayer.com)

## The Guadalupe River Chapter of Trout Unlimited

### Honors Our Century Club Members

The following have contributed \$100 or more for GRTU programs, including the Guadalupe River Legal Defense Fund, in addition to their supporting membership donations and lease access fees. Please note: This list is only current as of press time; we apologize to members added after that date.

Hector Allende  
David Baird  
Bob Blair  
Randy Bland  
Andre Boutte  
Alan Bray  
Page Bristol  
Norman Carpenter  
Jonmichial Carter  
Walter Carver  
Sam Castleberry  
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Frank Estes  
Charles Ferguson  
Michael Ferrill  
Joe Filer  
Jay Forrest  
Nancy Foster  
Bruce Friedman

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### **GRTU Newsletter**

Publication dates: January, April, and October to over 4,000 Trout Unlimited members in Texas.

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Ad sizes: Business card size, 1/4, 1/2 and full page. Rates: Business card- \$75 for 1 issue, \$125 for 2 issues, \$175 for 3 issues; 1/4 page- \$90 for 1 issue, \$140 for 2 issues, \$200 for 3 issues; 1/2 page- \$150 for 1 issue, \$250 for 2 issues, \$375 for 3 issues; full page- \$275 for 1 issue, \$450 for 2 issues, \$625 for 3 issues. Ad Copy: Camera-ready black and white. Ad copy deadlines: January artwork due December 1; April artwork due March 1; October artwork due September 1. Payment: Due with artwork. Make checks payable to Guadalupe River Chapter, TU. Mail to GRTU c/o Phil Dopson, Chapter Treasurer, at PO Box 536, Austin, TX 78767.

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12 noon - 5PM Eastern Time