



Cross Currents

June 2007

President's Message

Curt Morgret

We got together recently in Bill's garage and decided it was time to grant our annual awards. Our group doesn't really have a name; there's a bit of an anarchistic undertone to the group so rules and names get a lot of resistance. Well, "we" aren't really anarchists but saying that makes us feel a bit edgy and "we" picture ourselves drinking coffee made from day-old grounds and drinking cheap whiskey straight from the bottle -- fly fishing revolutionaries with grand designs of changing the world order, or at least our daily routine.

And "annual awards" is stretching the idea since "we" don't give them out annually, the awards change from time-to-time, there's no real criterion and there aren't any plaques. I've never witnessed a nominating process; the whole thing happens more or less in a spontaneous, intuitive way. But I don't agree with the argument it's just a way to justify talking about people "we" know behind their backs. There is real substance to these awards, or whatever they are.

Enough history and procedural matters, let's get down to business.

Luckiest SOB "We" Know -- Ok, one more thing: "we" don't give out full names in the

interest of protecting fellow revolutionaries. This award goes to Tom Z. Somehow, Tom convinced his wife that ditching his current job in the Midwest to take a job in Colorado, and becoming a part-time fishing guide as well, was a good idea. Not only did he convince her, but he quickly sold his home in a difficult real estate market and bought a house his wife had not seen -- and she is still happy. "We" figure a tremendous amount of karma was used up in this whole thing and "we" suspect Tom may have pilfered a bit of it from his friends as well. Usually these things don't take place all at once, which amazes us even more that Tom could put together a string like that without detonating something first.

Upcoming meetings:

June 5: **Hot dog burn and bluegill fishing at Bethel Park.** MMTU will provide hot dogs, buns and condiments, chips, cookies, soda and table service, please bring a side dish to share. We'll begin to gather about 5:30 and eat sometime thereafter. Bethel Park is just west of Rock Bridge High School, or two blocks west and one south of the intersection of Providence and Nifong.

July: NO MEETING Everyone with any sense has left Missouri and is casting flies in a cool western climate somewhere.

August 7. Dr. Bob Sites, Professor of Entomology, University of Missouri. Results of the Little Piney insect sampling project.

Best Looking Fly Shop Owner – Amy P. wins this hands down. Some folks might argue about this but “we” didn’t think Scott P. held a candle and the only other one “we” know very well is Tom H. and his beard rules him out. Besides, as a university type, Amy P. potentially has the kind of mentality that makes her a natural for membership consideration in “we.” Although this award seems a bit superficial for a group like ours, “we” still admit “we” are only human and sometimes “we” drive to the fly shop to buy tippet only as an excuse to see Amy’s smile. Congratulations and please don’t threaten us with a restraining order.

Best Lunch to Pack in a Fly Vest – A lot of things get flattened, crunched up and squished in a fly vest during the course of a day but not taking something to eat is even worse. Sandwiches sometimes work but smashed bread and mayo squeezed out all over the sandwich bag destroys a bit of the ambience and potato chips are more like potato dust when its time for lunch. But, and this is our winner, a tube of summer sausage and a small block of cheese is perfect. And what could be more “revolutionary”-like than sitting on a log with a big ol’ knife carving up some meat and cheese for lunch? Combine that with a dark, surly look and some unshaven whiskers and the more civilized, “establishment” fly fishers will abandon the stream leaving you all to your self. Sustenance and resistance.

Best Fly – This gets a bit tricky and the rationalizations are sometimes difficult to follow, but it has to be the Madam X. It had to be a fly that was somewhat versatile – you can fish the Madam dry or strip it through the bottom end of a run like a streamer – and it had to have an absence of “fanciness.” Sure, there are more proletariat types of flies such as the Leech but “we” are not totally above grace and beauty and sometimes “we” like the idea of seeing a trout raising his nose above the water and sucking down a dry fly.

Still, there is a sparseness of materials involved and at times a brutal efficiency to the fly, which fits in with our self image, as well.

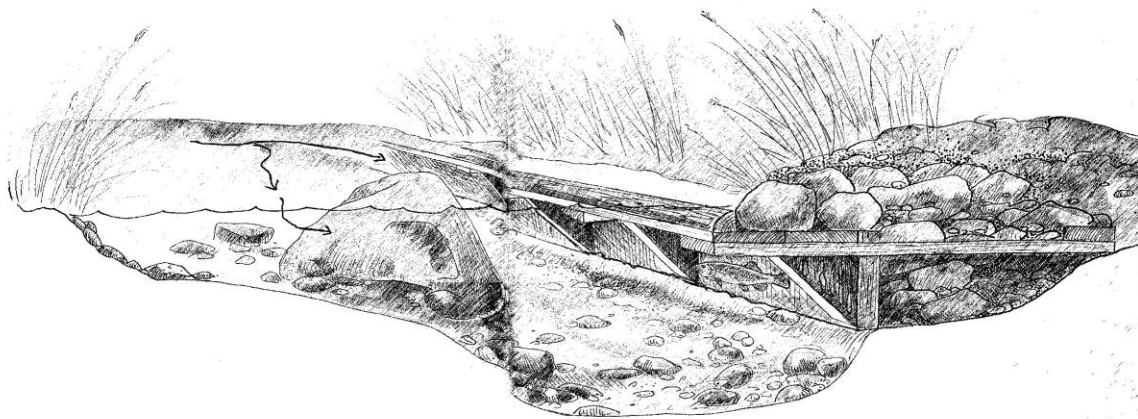
So that’s it for this year and don’t forget to attend the Hot Dog Burn where “we” will have a membership kiosk with application forms available.

Mill Creek Habitat Improvements

Nick Girondo
MDC Fisheries Management Biologist

The wild rainbow trout population of Mill Creek in Phelps County is about to get a home makeover. The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), with help from many private funding sources, recently purchased a 432 acre tract of land containing 1 ¼ miles of stream frontage on Mill Creek. This new property is called the “Bohigian Conservation Area”, in honor of Dr. Bohigian who made a significant contribution of this property. This area is located just outside of Rolla. With this acquisition, the public has access to fish the upper 2/3 of this coldwater stream within MDC and U.S. Forest Service ownership.

Starting in the summer of 2007, structures will be placed in the stream to create new habitat that will help adult trout survive. This small, clear, spring-fed stream is very shallow with extensive amounts of gravel and watercress vegetation. This type of habitat is great for young-of-year and one year old trout; however, older fish have a hard time surviving without deep pools and overhead cover that are currently lacking in the stream. The new structures are designed to create these habitats within the stream. These structures include skyhooks, boulders, anchored root-wads, half logs, hard points and some other innovative techniques.



Skyhooks will be the main structures installed on the Bohigian CA portion of Mill Creek. Skyhooks are structures designed to increase the amount of overhead bank cover for trout. They are assembled out of rough cut green oak on the stream site and then set into the bank. Large rock is then installed to armor the structures and stabilize the bank.

This creates a 22-inch overhang submerged just below the waterline, an ideal hiding place for trout. When placed at the tail of the riffle, skyhooks provide a protected home close to a food source. These structures have been successfully installed in Barren Fork in Shannon Co, a stream similar to Mill Creek, and are being used by adult trout there.



Heavy equipment will be used to put these structures in place. Although construction will create some unavoidable disturbance, precautions will be taken to ensure that no long-term damage occurs. Recovery from disturbance has been rapid and complete at enhanced sites on Barren Fork and careful use of equipment will ensure

a similar quick recovery of the streamside vegetation on Mill Creek.

Many factors play a role in the size of a trout population, including habitat availability, food sources and water quality. By increasing the availability of adult trout habitat on Mill Creek, MDC is taking steps to provide anglers with a unique trout fishing opportunity in mid-Missouri.

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***Cross Currents**, the Mid-Missouri Chapter of Trout Unlimited newsletter, has a circulation of approximately 300. Regular chapter meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month, except for July. The meeting place is the Missouri Department of Conservation, Resource Science Center at Stadium Blvd. and College Ave. in Columbia, Missouri. Meeting time is 7:00 p.m.*

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