

TROUT LINE

SUMMER
2015



Newsletter from the Montana Council of Trout Unlimited

Yellowstone cutthroat restoration

Agencies tap MTU's recommendations for Soda Butte Creek project by staff

As a native fish restoration project that removes non-native species, the upcoming project proposed for 38 stream miles in the Soda Butte Creek drainage in and above Yellowstone National Park is both usual and unusual. The project will use rotenone, a widely used, short-lived chemical, to remove invasive brook trout that threaten the persistence of native Yellowstone cutthroat trout in the Lamar River drainage, an important cutthroat

stronghold. Despite internet-spawned mythology about the supposed dangers of rotenone, when used responsibly this chemical is a very good tool for removing unwanted fish species when all other methods fail. Decades of projects in Montana and elsewhere bear this out. Rotenone is derived from plants, easily breaks down after application, does not accumulate in the environment or move up the food chain, and at the

see SODA BUTTE CREEK, page 7

Who are these guys?

Tintina Resources and its Smith River watershed mine proposal by Bruce Farling

Most of the media attention on the copper mine proposed near Sheep Creek, in the upper reaches of the Smith River watershed, has focused on why locals want it and why people with an affinity for the river don't. Information on project backers is a little lacking. In a nutshell: It ain't Montanans.

Damaging acid mine pollution at the Black Butte mine is a real risk.

in Montana – including recent mines – includes thousands of acres of contaminated land, permanent pollution sources, boom-and-bust communities and hundreds of millions of dollars in cleanup fixes, it's important to know who is behind this high-risk project. That information, however, has been fairly scarce in the company's considerable promotional efforts.

Here are some things you should know:

- Tintina is a new and very junior Vancouver, Canada company. Though its materials say the Black Butte project is its "flagship" venture, implying it has a fleet of mines, this is its first and only mine project.
- Though the two primary public faces for the company are on the management team and Meagher County natives, none of the folks calling the shots and providing the finances – the board of directors – are Montanans. The board president and CEO works for an Australian mining company, Sandfire Resources,

see TINTINA, page 6

MTU camp a success

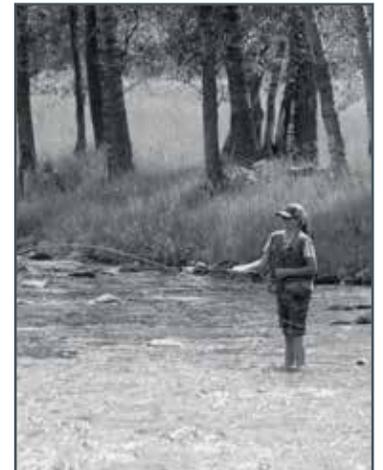
10th annual camp rewarding for all by Kate Grant

Montana TU's 2015 Conservation and Fly Fishing Camp in July was a resounding success. Campers aged 11-14 met many new friends and mentors at Camp Watanopa on Georgetown Lake. More than 16 volunteers – most from TU's WestSlope and George Grant Chapters – taught campers how to tie knots, cast a fly rod, catch and release trout, tie flies, identify fish and insects, read trout water and understand the importance of watershed conservation. The



kids also learned river etiquette and trout habitat, and they toured FWP's Washoe Fish Hatchery. Campers visited a habitat restoration site with a new fish screen on a Rock Creek tributary where bull trout return each year to spawn.

Most of the young anglers caught fish in Flint Creek, Georgetown Lake and Rock Creek. Several of the camp's resident moose shared the same paths and lakeshore as the campers – even visiting the tetherball and volleyball courts in front



see FLY FISHING CAMP, page 5

Tintina Resources proposes to mine copper from a geologic type that will probably produce an acidic discharge and require massive groundwater pumping, while necessitating surface disturbance for an underground mine that includes waste rock and tailings facilities, a mill and water treatment plant, roads, frequent truck traffic, and other developments. Tintina's promotional material says the mine will last 11-14 years, and it could employ 200 workers once production begins. This will all be very close to Sheep Creek, one of the most important sources of clean water and trout spawning habitat for the Smith River (Sheep Creek enters the Smith at Camp Baker, the launch site for permitted floaters).

Because the legacy of hardrock mining

Chairman's message

MONTANA TU'S MISSION

is to conserve, protect and restore Montana's world-class coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.

Founded in 1964, Montana Trout Unlimited is a statewide grassroots organization comprised of 13 chapters and approximately 4,000 TU members.

www.montanatu.org



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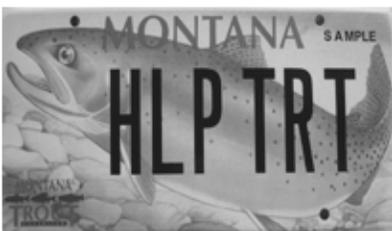
EDITING AND DESIGN.....BRUCE FARLING & KATE GRANT

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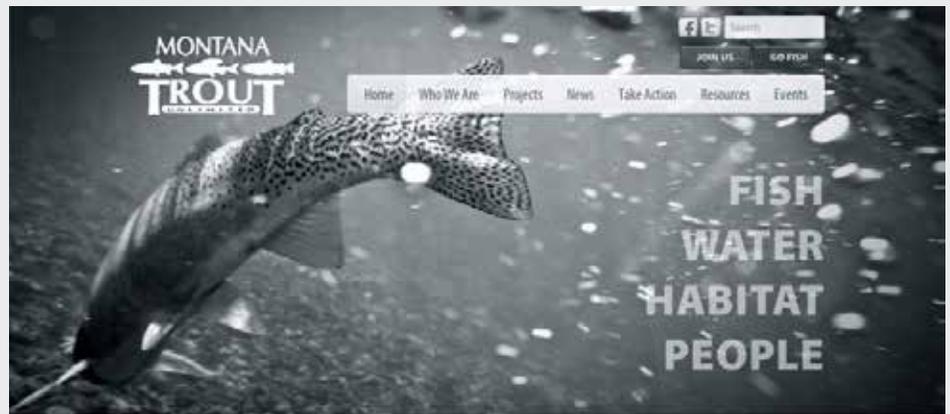
August reminds me of past hikes into high mountain lakes and beautiful cutthroat rising slowly through crystal clear waters to dry flies. These same high mountain lakes and the streams that flow from them make up the headwaters of Montana's great rivers. These cooler headwaters are acting more and more as refugia for Montana's coldwater fish as they adapt to warmer summer river temperatures. Refugia is defined as an area in which a population of organisms can survive through a period of unfavorable conditions. This summer Montana has seen some of the earliest and warmest temperatures in 100 years. The warmer drier conditions we are

refugia

experiencing concern me, but knowing that habitat work begun years ago, and continuing today by Montana TU staff, volunteers, and partners is easing this adaptation for our coldwater fish and the fisheries their survival support keeps me optimistic. As trout adapt to changing conditions so too will anglers adapt in how and when they fish in these waters at these times. Stay cool, hike into your favorite cold mountain lake before summer ends, and enjoy watching those colorful coldwater trout glide up to take your fly.

Chris Schustrom

Have you checked out Montana TU online lately?



Stay informed with our daily updates on Facebook, Twitter and on our two websites:



MontanaTU.org



SmithRiverWatch.org

Find out about the latest TU projects and events in your area, and keep an eye on issues important to anglers and cold-water conservationists. TU is doing a tremendous amount of work for Montana's fisheries and their watersheds.

Top ten reasons why Montana TU is a good investment

by Kelley Willett

If your mailbox looks like mine, you'll discover the needs for worthwhile charities exceed your net worth. How do you decide your philanthropic priorities? Here are the "Top 10" reasons why Montana Trout Unlimited should make the cut:

#10 Every dollar stays in Montana.

#9 Until September 30th, every dollar you give is worth \$2, thanks to the generous Cinnabar Foundation match.

#8 The volunteers we work with strongly believe in our work. In 2014 TU volunteers in Montana contributed more than 15,831 hours to help conserve and restore cold-water fisheries. That is 659 24-hour days – or nearly two years.

#7 TU has members in 54 of Montana's 56 counties. These 4,000 members belong to 13 local TU chapters. Montana TU ties them together, ensuring the full TU community, including our national organization, is sharing resources and working together on the same objectives.

#6 We support projects on the waters you fish. In the last year Montana TU has awarded nearly \$60,000 in grants to our local chapters for habitat restoration, youth education and fishery research. Fisheries benefitting include the Kootenai, Clearwater, Sun, Blackfoot, Clark Fork, Bitterroot and Madison Rivers.

#5 The record is clear, for more than half a century we have practiced nimble conservation, always adapting to the latest threats to cold-water fisheries or recreational stream access in Montana.

#4 Montana TU uses the best available science to drive our activities and resource allocation. That's why agency biologists, researchers and professional fishery organizations lean on us for help.

#3 Lawmakers at the Legislature and in Congress irrespective of political affiliation will tell you they look to Montana TU for expert help and advice.

#2 Montana TU supports the next generation of conservationists through, among other things, our long-standing, annual and popular Fly Fishing and Conservation Camp (10 years strong) for kids. And we are there to support local chapter youth angling and conservation programs from Darby to Billings.

#1 Remember that one trout you caught (or missed) that you could not shake? It was beautiful and mysterious, and strong and a worthy adversary for a few seconds on a perfect day? Well, reason number one is ensuring that your son, daughter, grandkids or (in my case) niece.... any youngster you love.... will similarly be able to delight and wonder while fishing for healthy wild and native trout in Montana.

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Chapter News

Flathead Valley Chapter

In June, the chapter worked with local press to increase awareness of potentially harmful clear-cut logging in key North Fork Flathead bull trout spawning tributaries. Earlier this summer, the Bureau of Reclamation gave chapter Board members a guided tour of the Hungry Horse Dam to explain the selective withdrawal system that controls water temperature in the South Fork and main stem of the Flathead River. Lower water temperatures released from Hungry Horse could help reduce heat-related stress on downstream fish populations. Chapter public service announcements on proper catch and release techniques received good exposure across western Montana over the summer, which is particularly important when stream temperatures are higher and flows are near record lows. The American Fisheries Society will show an extended trailer of the chapter's video, "Jewel in The Crown," at the national organization's annual meeting this August in Portland, OR. The video features the plight of Flathead bull trout. Contact Larry Timchak at ltimchak1@gmail.com.

WestSlope Chapter

With the help of Mollie Simpkins, chapter board member and owner/founder of Fashionista.com, the chapter is partnering with Girl Scouts of Montana and Wyoming on September 19 for a one-day fishing and conservation program in Missoula. Girls from 2nd to 8th grade will learn the basics of entomology, fly tying, casting, knots and watershed conservation. Generous contributors to the program include Grizzly Hackle, The Missoulian Angler, Plano Molding, Doc's Sandwich Shop, Trout Unlimited, Orvis and Temple Fork Outfitters. Cost for Girl Scouts is \$8 and \$23 for non-scouts, who are welcome to attend. Register at <http://gsmw.org>.

Kootenai Valley Chapter

The Kootenai River Habitat Enhancement Project started this summer when dozens of logs and loads of root wads and stumps were stockpiled next to the Dunn Creek boat ramp, two miles below Libby Dam. The chapter contributed more than \$4,800 for loading and hauling the wood donated by Lincoln County. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is managing the project and will oversee the installation of the woody debris this September at the mouth of Dunn Creek. Chapter members plan to stay involved and hope to participate with installation activities. Contact Mike Rooney at 406-293-1947.

Joe Brooks Chapter

After the chapter's inaugural "Women's Meet and Greet," a core group of Livingston-area gals followed up with additional casting practice in late spring. Their first excursion took place in Yellowstone Park, and recently in the Yellowstone River. Chapter members are concerned that a proposal by Lucky Minerals, Inc., for mine exploration near Emigrant Creek, on the east side of Paradise Valley, could eventually lead to water quality degradation in Emigrant Creek and the Yellowstone River. Leaders from the chapter submitted

public comments to the Forest Service by the 8/20/15 deadline. Members can view Montana TU's comments on the proposal at www.montanatu.org in the "recent correspondence" page of the "Resources" section. Joe and Michael Brooks are in the midst of producing "Joe Brooks: The Story of How Love Changed Fishing Forever," a film about their great uncle and the chapter's namesake. Check out www.joebrooksdokumentary.com for details.

Big Blackfoot Chapter

This summer, the chapter teamed up with the Helena National Forest and others to replace two undersized stream crossings and restore two Blackfoot tributaries impacted by placer mining. The chapter also collaborated with private landowners, University of Montana, USFWS, MFWP and TU's WestSlope Chapter to remove a riparian road system that was harming Shanley Creek. A new road was constructed away from the stream and two undersized culverts were removed. An existing ford was replaced with a bridge (see photo). With help from multiple partners, including Montana TU, a new fish screen was installed this summer on Liverpool Creek. These projects will benefit native westslope cutthroat trout. The chapter plans to install fish screens this fall on Trail



Ryen Aasheim

This bridge replaces a ford across Shanley Creek in the Blackfoot River drainage.

Creek and Stonewall Creek -- the result of strong conservation partnerships in the Blackfoot watershed. Contact Ryen Aasheim at ryen@montanatu.org.



FLY FISHING CAMP, from page 1
of the cabins. Kids enjoyed watching wildlife and often took alternate routes to keep a safe distance.



The camp succeeds every year thanks to a dedicated cadre of volunteers, businesses and TU chapters. Mike and Carrie Willett prepared a fantastic BBQ on the first night of camp with food provided by TU's WestSlope Chapter. Each morning, long-time camp volunteers Penny and Bill Ritchie put together great breakfasts. Volunteers brought along driftboats and rafts, and even used their own flies to share with the campers.



Montana TU expressly thanks Paul Moseley and Ruby Springs Lodge for generously sponsoring the camp for three years. It's a great way to foster the next generation of anglers who will conserve, protect and restore the resources we all treasure.



A BIG THANK YOU to these folks, organizations and businesses for making Montana TU's 2015 Conservation and Fly Fishing Camp a success:

**T
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U**

Molly Barth
Bitterroot TU Chapter
Blackfoot River Outfitters
Norman Bohrsen
Karin Flint
Flint Creek Outdoors
FlyVines.com
George Grant TU Chapter
David Gordon
Casey Hackathorn
Grizzly Hackle
Dave Hagengruber
Roger Harvey
Ed Igarek
Joe Brooks TU Chapter
Bert Lindler
Magic City Fly Fishers
Missoulia Angler
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Ed Monnig
Paul Moseley
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Bill & Penny Ritchie
Ruby Springs Ranch
George Stern
Chuck Stokke
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TINTINA, from page 1

as does another board member. Two members speak for New York City hedge funds that have invested significantly in Tintina. The final slot is filled by a mining industry professional from Vancouver.

- Australian-based Sandfire Resources owns a controlling interest in Tintina; the next largest interests are the hedge funds.
- Sandfire's CEO was quoted in the Australian press saying it only gets involved in projects when "we can pull levers and push buttons," and that, "...we will be treating it (Tintina) as if it's a wholly owned subsidiary." He says the company is looking at owning more than 50 percent of Tintina. And therefore interests nearly 10,000 miles away in Perth, Australia, will be making decisions affecting the welfare of one of Montana's most revered rivers.

Montana TU's staff and executive committee have met the management team and most Tintina board members. They are sincere and likeable folks. But like all people in the mining industry, they are huge optimists, apparently believing that indeed the mine will cause no problems. However, Tintina's promises are no different than those made by all mining companies in Montana -- including the vast majority that have left pollution and unreclaimed messes behind.

An exhaustive, peer-reviewed study (Kuipers and Maest 2006), co-authored by a credentialed mining engineer and respected geochemist, compared predicted water quality impacts with what actually occurred at 25 case study mines operating since 1975 around the country. It included several Montana operations. Among the findings: Twenty-one of the 25 mines failed to

meet water quality standards in local waters; in eight of the nine cases where highly damaging acid-mine pollution occurred, the pre-mining environmental studies either didn't predict or ignored this problem. The authors found that 100 percent of the mine operators (and regulating agencies) promised one thing, but in the end they incorrectly predicted the outcome -- to the detriment of water quality -- for some items nearly 80 percent of the time. Some of the worst examples are in Montana, which doesn't speak well of our regulating agencies.

Damaging acid mine pollution at the Black Butte mine is a real risk. It could come from discharges from the underground works or from surface tailings facilities. Acid drainage reduces pH and can leach heavy metals from surrounding materials into nearby streams. But Tintina says don't worry about acid mine drainage, dewatering local streams or other problems -- even though the company (nor any independent experts) has yet to complete data collection or fully analyze potential water quality effects from metals, low pH or nitrates (left over and dissolved from blasting operations.). Also incomplete is an evaluation of groundwater and surface water interactions, and how the operations will affect water supply. Finally, the company has yet to produce a detailed operating plan or engineering designs for the project. Yet for two years it has been telling Montanans there will be no impacts.

Montanans have seen and heard all this before from outsiders. No one should hesitate about speaking badly of this mine proposal.

For more information on the mine proposal in the Smith River country -- and other information about the Smith -- visit Montana TU's site at SmithRiverWatch.org.



Don't let mining harm Sheep Creek and the Smith River.

Please tell Montana's mining regulators at the Department of Environmental Quality and Governor Steve Bullock that Sheep Creek and the Smith River are too important to risk.

Governor Steve Bullock

State Capitol
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Helena, MT 59620

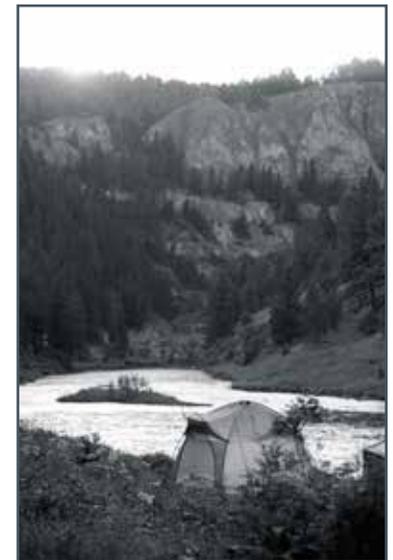
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To learn more, visit
SmithRiverWatch.org



Matt Mendelison

Morning on the Smith

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Does your business match employee contributions to nonprofits? Many companies will match charitable donations made by their employees and retirees. Some even double the money! It's an excellent way to stretch your conservation dollars with a gift to Montana TU.

For more information on how you can make a gift to Montana TU, please contact us at
P.O. Box 7186
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406-543-0054 kelley@montanatu.org



SODA BUTTE CREEK, from page 1

low concentrations applied in fishery projects harms only gilled organisms. At Soda Butte, it will be applied in the fall when amphibians are beyond the gilled stage. Though aquatic insects will be harmed, experience from similar projects indicates they recolonize quickly from surrounding untreated waters.

The methods and objectives for the project are identical to what has worked successfully at many similar projects across Montana. Somewhat unusual is the number of agencies that have agreed to cooperate across jurisdictions for this project, including Montana FWP, the Wyoming Fish and Game Department, the U.S. Forest Service and Yellowstone National Park. Also not usual is how much effort the agencies applied in first employing an alternative method of removal – more than a decade of intensive electrofishing. Despite these efforts, the remoteness and spatial scale involved, as well as the presence of large amounts of woody debris, make it impossible to remove all the brook

TU Supporters – Join or Renew Here

Trout Unlimited encourages members to stay current and welcomes new members to join our community. \$15 of TU's \$17.50 introductory membership goes right back to the new member's chapter. Be sure to indicate the chapter # you wish to join or renew—listed on the right-hand column of page 5 in this newsletter.

Choose one of three options:

1. Join or renew at www.tu.org, or
2. Call TU's membership services at 800-834-2419, or
3. Send payment with this completed form to TU, Box 7400, Woolly Bugger, WV 25438.



Membership Level (Circle Amount)

Introductory – New Members Only	\$17.50	Youth Membership	\$12
Regular Membership	\$35	Family/Contributor	\$50
Senior Membership (age 62+)	\$20		

To learn about TU's additional membership levels, visit www.tu.org or call 800-834-2419.

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trout with electrofishing. Once annual electrofish efforts are relaxed, the brook trout population would rapidly grow and expand.

Therefore the agencies are opting for chemical removal, which will eliminate all the brookies.

Montana TU supports the project, but we recommended the agencies modify their original plans and preserve the slightly hybridized cutthroats in the watershed. The original plan was to eliminate the hybrids along with the brook trout. The hybrids would then be replaced with genetically pure cutthroats. However, because this involved eliminating in the short run a popular sport fishery supporting 1,700 angler-days in Montana alone, and because the level of hybridization is negligible, we recommended the agencies save some of the fish for restocking right after treatment.

Though our preference is to restore a genetically pure population, we noted that the cutthroat population below Ice Box Falls, the barrier that constitutes

the lower boundary of the project, is already hybridized more than that in the proposed treatment reaches upstream. Further, the park protects those fish with catch and release regulations.

After hearing from anglers complaining about the removal of the slightly hybridized fish, and considering Montana TU's recommendations, the final decision for the project indeed includes a plan as we recommended preserving some of the existing nominally hybridized fish to maintain a sport fishery right after treatment. This approach will provide an opportunity for researching how well the nominally hybridized fish fare over the long haul (they are still genetically 99 percent Yellowstone cutthroat). Further, it helps ensure that instead of creating resistance from anglers for native fish restoration projects, we can attract more supporters.





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TROUT LINE Summer 2015

UPCOMING EVENTS

www.montanatu.org

9/16/15 Trout Unlimited Annual Meeting
Sept. 16-19 at the Hilton Conference Center in Scranton, PA. Meetings and seminars are free for TU members. Register for meals, hosted fishing, conservation tour, banquet and more at tu.org or call Jeff at 203-216-7078.

9/16/15 Crown of the Continent Roundtable
The 6th Annual Roundtable Conference is Sept. 16-18 in the University Center building at the University of Montana in Missoula. "New Ideas and Enduring Values: The Next Generation of Leadership in the Crown," aims to connect people to enhance culture, community and conservation through workshops, presentations, films and field trips. Visit www.crownroundtable.org.

9/16/15 WestSlope TU STREAM Girls 2015
11 a.m. - 3 p.m. at McCormick Park in Missoula. Girls from 2nd to 8th grade will learn about fly fishing and conservation with TU's WestSlope Chapter, Girl Scouts, Fishionista.com and their partners. Register at <http://gsmw.org> or call Mollie at 406-396-4737.

9/25/15 Bitterroot TU's 36th Annual Banquet and Auction
5 p.m. at the Bitterroot River Inn, 139 Bitterroot Place Drive in Hamilton. Enjoy dinner, drinks, live and silent auctions, door prizes and raffles. Contact Ross at rossrademacher99@gmail.com or Marshall at drtrout@mtbloom.net.

9/26/15 Montana TU State Council Meeting
9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at GlaxoSmithKline, 553 Old Corvallis Rd. in Hamilton. Contact Kate at 406-543-0054 or kate@montanatu.org.

To find out when your local TU chapter resumes monthly membership meetings, programs and events this fall, visit www.montanatu.org and click on Events or contact a chapter representative. Chapter contact information is available on page 5 of this newsletter.

WANT OVER 3,900 MONTANA TU MEMBERS TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR EVENT?
Please contact us at 406-543-0054 or kate@montanatu.org to get the word out in Trout Line

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