

50 Years of Conservation Work
1964 - 2014

**MONTANA
TROUT
UNLIMITED**
2014 Annual Report

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



This past September, Montana Trout Unlimited celebrated the 50th Anniversary of TU's formal introduction to Montana. National TU chartered the state's first chapter in 1964, after several years of organizing by early members Dan Bailey, Bud Lilly, Bud Morris and others. We were simply called the Montana Chapter of TU. Soon after, local chapters claiming stewardship of backyard rivers emerged in Livingston, Lewistown, West Yellowstone, Bozeman, Missoula, Butte and so on.

Today the Montana Chapter has morphed into the Montana Council, or Montana TU. We're now the statewide umbrella group working for 13 dedicated local TU chapters representing nearly 3,900 members. It is not a stretch to say Montana TU is the most effective state council in TU's national constellation.

Our legacy of success began with battles preventing construction of dams on the Yellowstone and Big Hole Rivers. We moved into grass-roots advocacy for the nation's first (and still best) wild trout management policy; created legal and financial tools for restoring habitat and streamflows; defended iconic rivers, such as the Blackfoot, from disastrous mining proposals; and stoutly defended the nation's greatest stream access laws.

We are still going strong. Most of our accomplishments result from a cadre of volunteers with uncommon passion. They love trout. They also love where trout live. In the last 18 months, TU members in Montana volunteered more than 16,000 hours toward our conservation mission. Coupled with our talented professional staff of five, with help from national TU staff, we deliver for our members and supporters. I am proud and humbled to lead Montana TU. Thanks to all who contribute to our success.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Haacke". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Doug Haacke, Chairman

Montana TU's past chairmen at the 50th celebration. (L-R) Doug Nation, Tom Anacker, Bill Cain, Bud Lilly, Harry Miller.



OUR MISSION

To conserve, protect and restore Montana's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.



2014 HIGHLIGHTS

Montana Trout Unlimited's volunteers and staff ably attended to the many challenges rivers and wild trout faced in 2014. Our financial health remains strong, and we now have nearly 3,900 TU members in the state. While Montana TU celebrated its 50th year, we also celebrated another victory: Our legal and financial assistance contributed to the Montana Supreme Court's decision affirming **everyone's right to access streams from public bridges.**

CONSERVE

We've worked hard to help ensure the 2015 Montana Legislature ratifies the state's proposed **water compact** with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes – an accord that promises significant fishery benefits for streams in Northwest Montana and the Clark Fork watershed. TU members volunteered hundreds of hours – and Montana TU invested thousands of dollars – in successful native fish conservation projects in the **Swan** and **Yellowstone River** watersheds. We also organized another first-rate **Conservation and Fly-fishing Camp** at Georgetown Lake. TU volunteers shared five days with 20 young anglers to help foster their passions for trout conservation.

PROTECT

Employing technical review and grassroots organizing, Montana TU mobilized to oppose a proposed copper mine threatening the **Smith River's** iconic fishery. We launched **SmithRiverWatch.org** to share information and updates. Members and staff helped prevent the Parks Division of Montana's Fish, Wildlife & Parks from adapting its plan to heavily develop land in the **Fish Creek** drainage, one

of the Clark Fork's most important tributaries. We weighed in with state and federal agencies with comments, alternatives and support for fisheries protection in the **Flathead, Yellowstone, Clark Fork, Jefferson and Missouri River** watersheds.



RESTORE

Montana TU continued our partnership with a local land trust to restore critical habitat at the mouth of **Rock Creek**, and we contributed thousands of restoration dollars for habitat improvement projects in the **Bitterroot, Blackfoot, Clark Fork, Shields and Madison River** drainages. We also learned that wild trout numbers in the upper **Jefferson River** have increased by about 400 percent, resulting largely from the collaborative efforts of our 10-year Jefferson River Restoration Project partnership with TU National.

Thanks to all the dedicated volunteers and supporters whose generosity led to Montana TU's conservation successes in 2014. Let's hear it for another 50 years of conserving, protecting and restoring Montana's extraordinary wild trout fisheries!

Montana Trout Unlimited: 50-plus

1962-63

Dan Bailey, Bud Lilly, Bud Morris and others begin forming the Montana Chapter of Trout Unlimited.



George Grant

1984

Declaring that the public can use all natural streams in the state for recreation, irrespective of who owns the beds and banks, the Montana Supreme Court rules in favor of the Montana Coalition for Stream Access.

1964

Trout Unlimited national formally charters the Montana Chapter of TU.

1974

The Montana Fish and Game Commission, at the urging of state biologists and TU, halts fish stocking in the Madison River. The nation's first wild fish management policy is soon adopted for all Montana rivers.

1985

The WestSlope Chapter helps prevent siting of 500-kilovolt BPA power line in upper Rock Creek, resulting in a \$1.6 million trust fund for conservation of Rock Creek.

Late 1960s

TU leads opposition to dam the Yellowstone River at Allenspur. Members advocate for catch-and-release, fight to clean up the Yellowstone from wastewater discharges, and battle harmful logging on public lands.

1975

TU leaders Tony Schoonen, George Grant and others convince the Montana Legislature to pass the landmark "310 law," which requires conservation district approval for stream modifications.



Big Hole River



Mid / Late 1970s

Butte-based TU members lead a campaign that kills the Reichle Dam proposal on the Big Hole River.

The Allenspur Dam proposal dies. Butte-area TU members organize the Montana Coalition for Stream Access, responding to landowner attempts to prevent access to the Dearborn and Beaverhead Rivers.

Mid-1980s

The Bitter Root Chapter promotes an agreement to dedicate 10,000 acre-feet of stored water to instream flows in the Bitterroot River. The Kootenai Fly Fishers chapter helps defeat a proposed re-regulating dam on the Kootenai River.

Years of Trout Conservation



1994

Montana TU hires its first full-time executive director.

1995

Montana Legislature approves a TU-spawned bill allowing conservation organizations to lease water rights for instream flows.

1998

TU national names Montana TU its outstanding state council.

1999

MTU helps negotiate a precedent-setting settlement for relicensing Avista Corp's two dams on the lower Clark Fork, resulting in tens of millions of dollars dedicated to restoring native trout populations.

2001

MTU partners with TU national to create the Jefferson River Restoration Project, leading to major improvements in the river's trout fishery.

2004

MTU leads the effort to defeat an industry-funded ballot initiative that would have put the Blackfoot River at risk from a huge open-pit cyanide leach mine.

2006

MTU prevails in a landmark Montana Supreme Court case establishing that groundwater connected to surface water is subject to basin closures on new surface-water rights.

2009

MTU efforts result in legislation affirming the rights of recreationists to use county bridge right of ways to enter rivers.



Attorney General Steve Bullock, Senator Kendall Van Dyk, Governor Brian Schweitzer and Mark Aagenes celebrate passage of the bridge access bill.



Stream access hearing in Helena

2011

MTU's lobbying and organizing defeats the "ditch bill," which aimed to undermine the state's stream access law.

2014

Cleanup and restoration begin in the mining-damaged headwaters of the Blackfoot River, the culmination of more than 25 years of MTU advocacy. MTU celebrates 50th Anniversary.

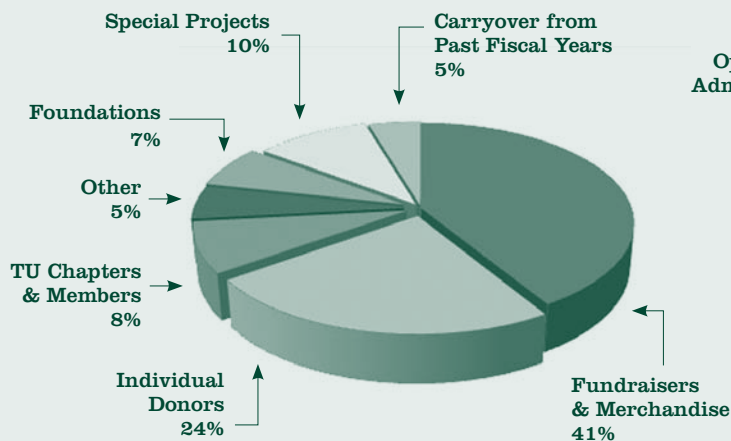


Cutthroat trout

FINANCIAL REPORT 2014 OCT. 1, 2013 – SEPT. 30, 2014

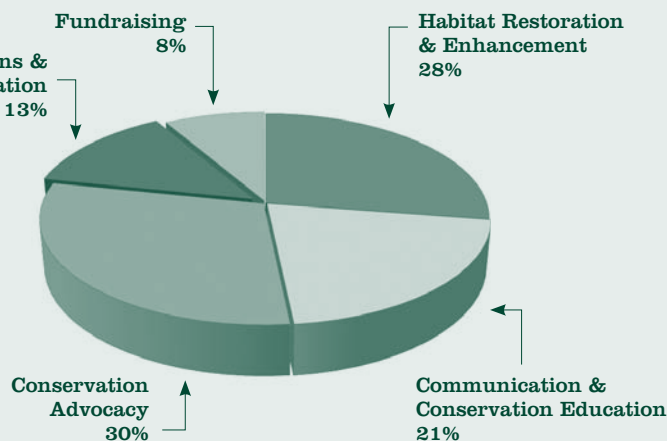
Source of Funds

Total: \$364,580



Use of Funds

Total: \$364,580



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Montana TU counts on the generosity of individuals, foundations and businesses and gratefully welcomes cash gifts, as well as stocks, securities and estate gifts.

- Cash and checks can be sent via post to Montana TU, P.O. Box 7186, Missoula, MT 59807.
- Credit card donations, either one-time or recurring, can be made online at www.montanatu.org.

Contributions to Montana TU are tax deductible and are used in Montana. For more information, to discuss designating a gift to a specific project or for planned gift assistance, please contact Kelley Willett at 406-543-0054.

Montana TU's financial statements are reviewed annually by Boyle, Deveny & Meyer PC, an independent CPA firm in Missoula, Montana.

THANK YOU to the donors and supporters who contributed between October 1, 2013, and September 30, 2014.

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Montana Trout Unlimited Staff (left to right): Bruce Farling, Tracy Wendt, Kelley Willett, Kate Grant, Mark Aagenes

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About Us

Founded in 1964, Montana Trout Unlimited is a statewide grassroots organization dedicated to conserving and restoring Montana's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. Montana Trout Unlimited comprises 13 chapters and approximately 3,900 TU members. As a TU affiliate, we work closely with our national organization on conservation priorities. Montana TU is financially independent of TU National and is governed by directors from each of the state's TU chapters. All contributions to Montana TU support conservation, protection and restoration efforts in Montana.



www.montanatu.org

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