

The Flypaper Newsletter

January 2023



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From The President

Welcome to the January Flypaper Newsletter and the beginning of the new year, 2023. I hope everyone had happy and safe holidays and enjoyed the company of friends and family while recharging their personal batteries.

After a very successful 2022 that demonstrated our Chapter's ability to get back into full swing after COVID, we are positioned for a great year in 2023. We couldn't have been successful over the past year without our fantastic volunteers and donors, and you are the reason that we were the Exemplary Chapter for CTU in 2022. We will have multiple opportunities in the coming year year to continue to build on our momentum, demonstrate our collaboration with other conservation organizations, and add to the Chapter successes. And, we will do this all while fishing as often as we can.



We have some new leaders this year and some existing leaders in new positions. Please join me in congratulating them and thank them in advance for their efforts to make sure that the Chapter is a well-oiled machine. The list of new leaders is below:

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Each of the committees are developing their plans for 2023 and will definitely need our help. Some of the exciting near-term activities will need our volunteers to step up with their time and skills to make them a success. One of particular focus is the RMFTU Trout Expo in March.

Let's have a great year, enjoy fishing in interesting locations, and share our enthusiasm with others.

And, remember... take someone fishing and you plant the seed for a lifelong coldwater conservationist.

You can make a difference!

Sincerely,

Dave



General Membership Meeting

Our next General Membership Meeting will be **Wednesday, January 18, 2023** at the:

**Northside Aztlan Community Center
112 E Willow St, Fort Collins, CO 80524**



January Meeting Fly Swap

Our Fly Swap is an opportunity to trade flies and recipes with your fellow Rocky Mountain Fly Casters each month. **The fly theme for the January 18th meeting is stonefly nymphs**. These small flies are your go to from late winter to late Spring. Examples include Little Black Stone, Golden Stone, Yellow Sally, etc. **Sign up or ask questions by emailing Dave Morse, your Swap Coordinator:**

[Email Dave Here](#)

This is how it works:

1. You will be notified of the number of copies of your favorite fly to tie. This depends on the number who register plus one for the evening door prize.
2. Bring your flies a small container with your name on it to the monthly meeting along with a toe recipe attached to each fly showing its name, size, materials/recipe, your name, and the date.
3. The flies and recipes are sorted and you will get back one fly from each participant (in your container) at the end of the meeting.

This is a fun way to practice your tying skills and to learn what effective flies other members use. **In the past we've had 6 to 8 participants each month, so tying is not a big burden.**





Colorado Supreme Court to Review River Access Case

In 2012, Roger Hill was wading the clear waters of the central Arkansas River in pinon-juniper country southeast of Salida when he was met with a barrage on flying rocks. He looked up from his angling to see an angry landowner hurling the stones off a 50 foot cliff, and after a heated verbal encounter he left for greener waters. Unperturbed, Hill returned to a nearby honey hole later that summer with similar results, and in 2015 some of his friends on the same stretch of river ended up looking down the receiving end of a handgun barrel.

The issue? Hill was wading on a piece of water adjacent to a privately owned condominium complex. In some western states such as Montana and Idaho, Hill's angling would have been like another walk in a public park. Many rivers in those public-favoring states were considered navigable at statehood and based on a federal law, the equal footing doctrine, their beds are state-owned and fair game for intrepid anglers willing to walk or float to their favorite holes from nearby public access points. In Colorado, however, when President Grant signed our proclamation of statehood in 1876, not a single river, including even the mighty Colorado, was considered navigable. Therefore, ownership of riverbeds did not go to the state, but was instead held by the U.S. and ultimately scooped up by private parties, like the one who laid claim to the land Hill was wading on.



Wading or anchoring on river bottoms adjacent to private land has the potential to be legalized.

Hill took to the courts in 2018 and has since been challenging Colorado's longstanding river access paradigm by arguing that the Arkansas was in fact navigable at statehood and that the title to the riverbed in the stretch of water he was fishing is the State of Colorado's, not the angry condominium complex proprietor's. However, his arguments have been muddled by questions of standing brought forth by the State. In other words, Colorado, with an agenda to maintain current land-ownership order and not allow legal battles against private land holders to erupt left and right, does not believe that as an ordinary citizen Hill can lay claim a river bed's title in their name.



Hill's case could shape the future of angling and river access laws in Colorado, starting on the Arkansas. Look out for a potentially precedent setting decision in the coming year.

In December, the Colorado Supreme Court announced that they would review Hill's case with regards to his standing. The resulting decision could be precedent setting. A win for Hill would give individuals the power to question the navigability of a river, and potentially acquire a title in the name of the State, thereby opening up previously private waters to public access. A loss would leave that power to the State, who, like we've seen for the last 146 years, will never act on it. In a press release, Colorado attorney general Phil Weiser made it very clear that he intends to keep Colorado's public access laws as is, which would protect the interest of private landowners, irrigators, and water user groups.

Keep your eyes peeled on the outcome of the case as it could mean big things for our angling opportunities here in Colorado. In the meantime, though, stick to public access areas!



Finding Trout Under the Ice

Boosted by a very cold December, the hard water season is in full swing in northern Colorado, and with it comes some very fun fishing opportunities that often get overlooked. While there are great fisheries throughout the state, we're lucky to not need to travel far to find exceptional ice fishing.

Safety First

Safety should be the top priority when ice fishing. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

1. "No ice is safe ice" – the point being no ice is 100% safe. Even if you think it is thick enough always come prepared
2. Ice should be at least 4" thick
3. Go with a friend
4. Carry ice picks
5. Check the ice quality – good, solid ice is clear or blue in appearance. Ice that looks slushy or milky is a sign of weak ice
6. Consider bringing a spud bar and life jacket
7. Consider wearing crampons



Red Feathers

Red Feathers is an excellent place for a beginner to get their feet wet (hopefully not literally though, see safety tips above). Try Dowdy or West Lake and be prepared to reel in a bunch of rainbows and browns. An effective tactic here is to go small with an ice fishing jig like the Ratfinkee and tip it with a wax worm. Find the bottom of the lake and then come 2 feet up. Try both light jigging and leaving it still. When initially dropping the jig feel for any hits, they will often come on the drop.

Laramie Plains

If you're willing to brave the wind, the plains lakes can be a great place to catch a variety of species including rainbows, browns, cutthroat, kokanee, and perch. A good place to start in this area is Lake Hattie. For trout, try similar tactics to those listed above. If you have a shelter, sight fishing for perch in shallow water can be a blast.

Chambers Lake

When you're ready to catch a real hog of a fish, try targeting a mackinaw at Chambers Lake. Be prepared for a hike if you don't have a snowmobile as the campground and Laramie River Road are closed this time of year. To target mackinaw, try to find some structure like a drop-off and tip a heavy tube jig with some sucker meat. A sonar really helps here as you can see where the fish are cruising and reel up to them. Alternatively, Granby is another great mackinaw fishery.



Just getting out there is the best part, so regardless of equipment or experience, just get out on the ice and maybe catch some fish.



Rod Making Class for Veterans

Platte Rivers Veterans is beginning its annual rod making classes for military veterans on January 7th. These Saturday morning classes will continue through April from 9-noon at the Peace with Christ Lutheran Church in Fort Collins, located just west of Rocky Mountain Highschool at 1412 West Swallow St. There is no cost for veterans to make their first rod and a kit typically takes 8 to 10 Saturdays to complete.



To Join, you must register as a veteran with the Platte Rivers Veterans Fly Fishing organization. You can do that by clicking this link: <https://platterivers.com/first-content-block/veterans/veteran-registration/>

Then you must contact the Fort Collins Lead and RMFC Veterans Program Chair Dave Morse to reserve a rod kit. They are available in 4 through 7 weight fly rod kits..

[Email Dave Here](#)

There will be similar classes in Loveland and Greeley if that is more convenient for northeastern Colorado residents. Dave can direct you to the leads in those communities.



Trout Fishing Expo

RMFTU Trout Fishing Expo
March 11, 2023
11AM - 4 PM
Northside Aztlan Community Center

We'd like to invite you to attend our 2023 Trout Fishing Expo. This is our annual fundraising event that allows us to conduct youth outreach and protect and restore local coldwater fisheries. **Adults are \$20 if pre-purchased on-line, \$25 at the door. Students, first responders, and veterans are \$10, and children (under 10) are free.**

We hope to make this Expo our best and biggest yet, so please come ready to spend some of your hard-earned money, knowing that **each dollar you spend will go to help RMF support many important projects**, from the Poudre Headwaters Project (PHP), to our summer Fly Fishing Youth Camp, to our Stream Temperature Monitoring Program. Our chapter also contributes \$1,000 each year to a CSU

student enrolled in a conservation or fisheries major. We also contribute \$1,000 each year to the Platte Rivers Veterans Fly Fishing non-profit.



Rick Takahashi demonstrates one of his great fly patterns at a previous Expo!

Event Features will Include:

- Fly tying demonstrations (15-20 well-known tiers) and kids fly tying
- Silent auction, raffle, and online raffle for a Sage Igniter rod and Ross Animas reel
- Door prizes
- Lunch (sandwich & beverage)
- "Trout Fishing Trade Show" – local fly shops and other fishing businesses
- Casting demonstrations, games, and movies
- Speakers: USFS (Poudre Headwaters Project), St Peter's (upcoming fishing season), Domingo Rodriguez (Euro Nymphing).

I sure hope you can be there to help kick-off the 2023 season! It's going to be a good one!

Mark Miller
RMF Outreach

We Need Your Favorite Fly Pattern

We are seeking individuals who would donate one dozen flies for the Trout Fishing Expo. Dave Morse will organize the donations into nice packages to be raffled off at the Expo. Please contact Dave to let him know of your participation and fly pattern.

[Email Dave Here](#)



Expo Title Sponsors

JAX | OUTDOOR GEAR
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SCHEELS

We are happy to announce that Scheels and Jax are both Title Sponsors for our March Expo. This is exciting news, and will help ensure that our annual Trout Fishing Expo fundraiser will be a resounding success.



Vince Herrera's St. Pete's Gear Corner and Fly Fishing Report

2022 has ended and the holidays are officially behind us. We can now take a load off and relax while we wait for spring to arrive and the water to open. I feel like a lot of us take the wintertime to catch up on tasks we missed while we were out fishing. Maybe it's housework, fly tying, or skiing, but for those feeling the cabin fever, finding open water might be hard but it is not impossible. It has been cold outside, and a lot of water has ice covering most stretches of the Poudre and Big Thompson Rivers, but the trout still need to eat. If you take the right precautions, you can still have a stellar day even during the months of January and February.



Winter Gear



If I am heading out to the river the first key to success is preparing my clothing. I can assure that your day will not be fun if you will be freezing the entire time. Starting with the obvious, get yourself some good synthetic socks. Cotton socks will absorb sweat and this is the biggest reason our toes become numb while fishing. Merino wool or synthetic materials like nylon and spandex will all shed moisture quicker keeping your toes warmer for longer. If you want the extra comfort, you can purchase Simms's OTC Merino Thermal Socks. OTC stands for Over the Calf and the sock will end just below your knee to help promote warm blood flow to your toes. These socks changed the game for me, and I'll even wear them at home and to work if the weather is that cold.

After I have a good sock the rest of my warmth comes from fleece. You can find fleece lined pants and pullovers in different weights from Simms and Patagonia. To some, the brand name isn't worth the price but when you get to experience how well these layers work you will quickly want more. Not only do they last extremely long, but they are designed and tested on the water to ensure every aspect of design gets accounted for. Fleece is made to hold heat close to your body and there have been days where I have to de-layer because it gets too warm, so it really is worth the investment if you plan on spending some time on the water during the winter.



After my layer of fleece, I will keep all the warmth in with a nice, water-resistant jacket. I encourage you to check out some of the offerings from Simms that feature Primaloft technology. This essential piece of clothing will keep you insulated on and off the water, rain or shine. Primaloft is a synthetic alternative to down insulation that stays warm even when wet. Not that we want to get wet in the winter, but it happens to the best of us. Simms jackets, like the Bulkley Jacket, will feature Primaloft Technology which gives you warmth on the inside with a GORE-TEX waterproof rain shell on the outside. It's a great 2-in-1 combo for any avid angler.

You cannot forget about gloves either. With good gloves like the Simms GORE-TEX Exstream Foldover

Mitt, you still maintain the ability to use your hands and fingers to tie knots and hold the fly line but there is a mitten that you can pull over your hands when they need to warm up or get wet. These gloves blew my mind when I put them to the test, and I think everyone in Colorado should have a pair like these for the winter time whether you fly fish or not. Layering correctly with the correct garments is going to be very important if you plan on spending any time outside when it's cold. You could be shoveling snow at home and good layers will keep you warm and comfortable as the temperatures plummet. If you have questions on what layers you will need, just come find me at the Old Town St. Petes.

Fishing Report

Now that we are prepared to withstand the chilly weather, we can hit the river. It's been a couple of days since we saw the negative temperatures roll out, so by now there should be some open runs and pools that we can work with our nymph rigs. Finding water this time of year can be a challenge, but Gateway Natural Area on the North Fork of the Poudre River and the Big Thompson Rivers are great places to start. Water flows out of reservoirs above these rivers and supplies fish with steady food and water temperatures all winter. These are known as tailwaters, and fish can be a bit smarter because of the relatively stable environment. Tailwaters do require a sneakier approach and you can take the same techniques used on a tailwater and apply them to a freestone stream, but freestone techniques do not always work on a tailwater. Think about joining our Technical Tailwater class on January 21st. The class is from 2-4pm and I will be talking about why fish are so smart in a tailwater and the steps we can take to increase our chances of catching these stinkers.

When I hit the water, my first piece of advice for the winter is to put the rod together but don't rig any flies yet. On several occasions, I have arrived at a piece of water where fish are rising to dry flies, and I have a double nymph rig set up...not the way you want to start your day. By skipping the rigging process, you can assess the water you will be fishing and if you don't see any fish hitting the surface, it is a safe bet to rig up two nymphs and start fishing below the surface of the water. If fish are rising, you will know it is time to rig up a dry fly. Tippet is going to be small, but I try to start with the strongest tippet I can get away with so start with 5x and have 6x ready to add on if needed. When I am nymphing I exclusively fish fluorocarbon for its high knot and tensile strength. If fish are really picky during the winter, the fluorocarbon tippet will be much harder for fish to see when it is submerged but it also sinks faster than monofilament as well. I only use monofilament if I know I will be fishing on the surface so leave that for dry fly fishing and fluorocarbon for nymphing.

A big key to fly selection during the winter and on any tailwater is choosing small flies with natural colors. Generally, we will be fishing midges with the occasional switch up to add a blue wing olive into the mix. Think of patterns like the Juju Midge #22, a Zebra Midge in a #20-24, Poison Tungs in #18-22, the Para-Midge #20-22, Eric's Hi-Vis Midge #18-22, CDC RS2 #18-22, Barr's Emergers #20-22, Copper Rib Rs2 #20-22 and my personal favorite, the Top-Secret Midge #20-24 (right). These flies mimic the natural food source and trout will not take any chances to eat a fly that looks out of the ordinary, so I often find myself using less shiny and colored flies during the winter months. Obviously 2 flies are better than just 1 so I will set my flies up about 16-18" apart.



I can't stress enough how important a light indicator will be. This will cause less of a splash on the surface when water is very clear and fish can see exceptionally well. I like the New Zealand Yarn Indicator as well as Palsa Pinch-on Foam Indicators. Both are easy to cast, easy to set up, and hit the water like a dry fly. It gives you a stealthier presentation when fish are at the height of their awareness. Add your split shot about 4 to 6 inches above your first fly to ensure that your bugs are getting down to the fish. Getting the right, drag-free drift is important. Your indicator should be floating as fast as the current it is drifting in. To slow your drift down, try adding weights in small increments and play with the depth of your rig.



If you can endure the cold temperatures, fishing can still be very productive and pretty enjoyable. You'll see less people, improve your fishing abilities, and see the river in a different light. Using some of the

tools and equipment mentioned above will allow you to stay warm, comfortable, and on the water longer with more success. I hope everyone had a great new year! It's comforting to know that we are one month closer to spring, and I can't wait. I look forward to hearing some winter fishing stories from people and if you do find yourself struggling to find fish, come in and ask some questions. Enjoy the month of January!



Meet the New Editor

Hi Everyone,

Isaac Fournier here, the new Flypaper Newsletter Editor. I grew up in Boulder exploring the diverse angling opportunities of the northern Colorado before packing up shop and heading to the Pacific Northwest for college. Between semesters filled with chasing steelhead in the arid eastern plateaus and western rainforests of Washington and Oregon, I filled my summers at a fishing lodge in Alaska, guiding in North Park (CO), and working in the fisheries biology sector of the northwest.

I moved to central Idaho after graduating and managed wildlife and coldwater fisheries for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game before making a move back to the base of the Front Range this summer. I currently live in Fort Collins, and when I'm not wrangling words together for the Newsletter you can find me working for a local environmental consulting company, on a river, picking up shed antlers, running, or at home with a book on western water policy.

Feel free to reach out and say hi or contribute content to upcoming editions of the Newsletter. I'd love to hear from you!

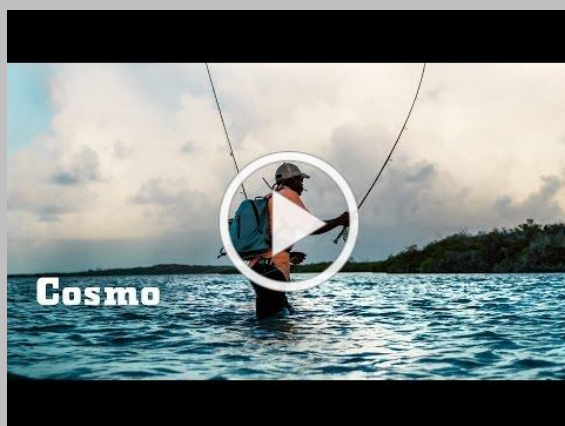
Isaac



[Email Isaac Here](#)



Video of the Month



In northern Colorado, winter fishing is all about religiously checking road conditions and cursing out that poorly-timed upcoming weekend snowstorm. Take 8 minutes to relieve yourself of winter fishing and travel stress by watching this adrenaline filled flats fishing hype film produced by YETI. The best part about the Seychelles? No studded snow tires necessary!



Local Fly Shops, Outfitters and Guides

St. Peter's Fly Shop

202 Remington St. Fort Collins, CO 80524
phone: 970-498-8968 / FAX: 970-482-5990
web site: www.stpetes.com | [Check out our classes](#)

St. Peter's South

925 E. Harmony Road, Suite 200, Fort Collins, CO 80525
phone: (970) 377-3785
website: www.stpetes.com | [Check out our classes](#)

Stone Creek, Ltd.

2645 - 64th Avenue / Greeley, CO 80634-8906
phone: (970) 330-7476 / Fax: (970) 330-2238
website: www.stonecreekltd.com

JAX Mercantile - Fort Collins

1200 N. College Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80524
phone: (970) 221-0544
web site: www.jaxoutdoor.com

Jax Mercantile - Loveland

2665 West Eisenhower
Loveland, CO 80537
website: stores.jaxgoods.com/jax-loveland

Elkhorn Rod and Reel

3121 West Eisenhower Blvd., Loveland, CO 80537
phone: 970-227-4707
web site: www.elkhornflyrodandreel.com

Scheels

4755 Ronald Reagan Blvd., Johnstown, CO 80534
phone: (970) 663-7800
website: www.scheels.com

Sportsman's Warehouse

1675 Rocky Mountain Avenue, Loveland, CO
website: www.sportsmans.com

Liarflies, LLC

3212 Wigwam Way
Wellington, CO
ph: Toll free 866-773-5128
web site: www.liarflies.com

She's Fly

Fort Collins, CO
ph: 970-682-4704
web site: www.shesfly.com



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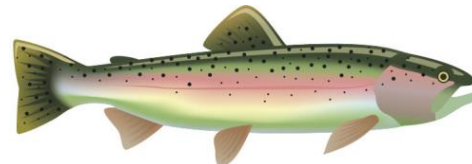


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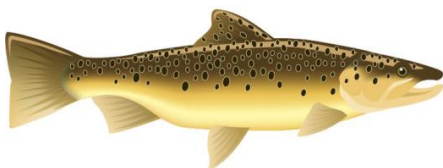
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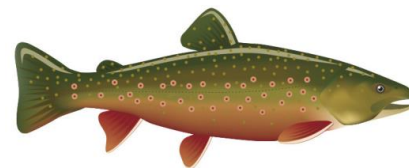
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THIS CERTIFICATE IS HEREBY AWARDED TO

Rocky Mountain Flycasters

FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING EFFORTS IN RESTORING HABITAT AND NATIVE TROUT, ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY, EDUCATING YOUTH, PROMOTING WATERSHED COLLABORATIONS, AND RAISING THE QUALITY OF THEIR HOMEWATERS ON THE CACHE LA POUDE AND BIG THOMPSON.

PRESENTED BY COLORADO TROUT UNLIMITED ON THE 22ND OF OCTOBER, 2022



Rocky Mountain Flycasters

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