



NEWSLETTER

wmflyfishingclub.com-flyfishingwmclub.com

Established 1996 P.O. Box 2187, Pinetop, AZ 85935 March, 2026



PRESIDENTS COLUMN –

Here we are into March with no Winter precipitation to speak of and our waters are suffering in the hopes of Spring rains.

Your Board has decided to drop plans for a WMFFC Fly Fishing Expo due to constraints, which I will go into at our March Meeting.

We are currently focused on the WMFFC 2026 Banquet on July 18th at the Hon-Dah Resort. We will need all hands on deck for ticket sales, contributions, and banquet set-up to make this as good or better than our 2025 banquet. We will keep you informed as we progress through the necessary preparations and advertising.

Hopefully, with this warmer weather, some of you have been able to get some fishing in and looking forward to your reports at our March meeting.

Our speaker this month will be our own Andy Rybolt on his trip to Belize.

As Always, Tight Lines,

Mike Whitney – Your President

Meeting—March 18

Held at White Mountain Nature Center

425 S. Woodland Rd. Lakeside

5:30 raffle and chatting

Program: BONE FISHING IN BELEZE b Andy Ryboldt

New Fundraising Raffle—Rod and Reel

Want to fish Montana (Montana Newsletter)

Those of us lucky enough to live around Bozeman have largely chosen to do so because of the [close proximity to good fly fishing](#). The ability to get in a quick pre- or post-work/class fishing session is better in Bozeman than almost anywhere else, with several great rivers within an easy half hour's drive. There's a reason Montana State University sells logoed "Trout U" apparel in the bookstore. Here are some of the best spots near town the next time you have a couple of hours and want to wet a line: The Gallatin is a picturesque river with crystal clear water and lots and lots of trout. The river is not known for trophy trout like some of the other larger rivers in the area, but the beauty of this river and its small intimate nature make it a local favorite. Because of the very high trout density, this river often produces fast action and high catch rates.



Gallatin River

Head west on Main Street, and you'll shortly cross the [Gallatin River](#) near Four Corners, just a few miles outside Bozeman. From Bozeman, you can be at the Gallatin River in 15 minutes, but you can also drive up or down the river much further if you want. While a few public fishing access sites exist downstream until the Gallatin's confluence with the Madison and Jefferson in Missouri Headwaters State Park, where they form the [Missouri River](#), most anglers head south from Four Corners and drive upriver towards Big Sky to fish. Once in the Gallatin Canyon, which begins about 12 miles south of Four Corners, you will be largely on National Forest land and will frequently find pull-offs on the highway where you can access the river. While the Gallatin receives a high amount of pressure from local anglers, the huge amount of accessible water means you can always just drive or walk a little further to get away from other fishermen. The Lower Madison is a unique fishery close to Bozeman. It can fish very well early and late in the season and has strong caddis and mayflies hatches. With a big canyon and then opening up into the large Gallatin Valley, the Lower Madison has a variety of sections and moods, but also has plenty of trout.

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While getting to the [Yellowstone River](#) from Bozeman is easy, successfully fishing it might not be, unless you have a boat. The sheer volume of water, in addition to its fast pace, makes the Yellowstone River a tough one to walk-and-wade fish successfully. There are certainly a few good spots around Livingston you can get to on foot if you're willing to explore. Still, good holding water on the Yellowstone River is generally pretty spread out due to its size, and it's often tough or impossible to move between spots without a boat. The river's proximity to Bozeman makes it a great option for an easy float trip however, and it is one of the most scenic rivers around.



Lower Madison River

Just within a half an hour from Bozeman (if you don't get stuck behind a line of cars on Hwy 84), the [Lower Madison](#) is another great option for a quick and easy fishing day. Especially in May and June, when the days are long and bugs are hatching, you'll find many anglers headed to the Lower Madison to fish the evening hatches. Most of the fishing on the Lower Madison takes place between Black's Ford, where Highway 84 hits the river, and Warm Springs Fishing Access, a few miles further upriver. There is very good access to both sides of the river in this stretch, and it's easy to get to from Bozeman. Going downriver from Black's Ford to the Grey Cliff or Cobblestone access sites takes quite a bit longer, as you have to drive down the bumpy, gravel Madison River Road, and fish numbers start to drop off downstream of Blacks Ford as well.

Yellowstone just outside Livingston, are wade anglers' dream streams. Low flows, shallow, clear water, bankside trails, ranch access roads, and strategically placed warming huts make the spring creeks some of, if not the best, wade fishing options there are. While you do have to pay to access the creeks, they cap the number of anglers, so it doesn't ever feel over crowded, and on the right days, the additional cost can be well worth it.

With five mountain ranges within 30 minutes of Bozeman, an abundance of smaller rivers exists. While getting access to these can be difficult because most public access points are on the larger rivers, discovering some good fishing on a smaller river can be the reward for some extra effort. Always be sure to access a river legally and know the Montana Stream Access Law.

Smaller Rivers & Tributaries

A handful of smaller rivers and tributaries of our major rivers lie within 30 minutes of Bozeman. From [tributaries in the mountains to meadow rivers](#), Bozeman isn't short of options for good walk-and-wade fishing on smaller waters. These small creeks serve up a variety of types of fly fishing. Anglers can scramble on small pocket-water creeks, stalk undercut banks on willow-lined meadow creeks, or even explore a few options with all characteristics. We won't name the smaller creeks--you will just need to "blue line" them yourself.

Lakes & Ponds

While Bozeman is much better known for its rivers and creeks than its [stillwaters and lakes](#), several good options near town can offer a fun change of pace. Hyalite Reservoir While Bozeman is much better known for its rivers and creeks than its [stillwaters and lakes](#), several good options near town can offer a fun change of pace. Hyalite Reservoir is a popular spot, and the lake holds good numbers of cutthroat trout, as well as a few grayling. Those less (or possibly more) adventurous can prospect for trout, bass, and perch at the "Bozeman Beach" pond, where MAP Brewing waits enticingly on the south bank. Another small pond near the mall is home to panfish and bass in addition to trout, though surrounding trees can make casting a fly rod difficult. Some of the nearby ponds also hold carp, though they're spooky and very elusive in these busy waters plus a few grayling. Those less (or possibly more) adventurous can prospect for trout, bass, and perch at the "Bozeman Beach" pond, where MAP Brewing waits enticingly on the south bank. Another small pond near the mall is home to panfish and bass in addition to trout, though surrounding trees can make casting a fly rod difficult. Some of the nearby ponds also hold carp, though they're spooky and very elusive in these busy waters.



BONE FISHING IN BELIZE

SPEAKER FOR MARCH

MEMBER, *ANDY RYBOLDT*

Andy Rybolt, joined the club in 2024 and last year joined the board and serves in the capacity of the person who arranges our speakers. Andy grew up in St. Louis and began fishing at age 9 or 10 at state parks. He moved to Arizona in 1973 but didn't fly fish again until he returned to Tucson in 1984. He spent many long weekends and vacations fishing the lakes in the White Mountains for the next 11 years before moving to Southern Oregon (12 years) and later to the Redwoods of Northern California (10 years). While in Oregon Andy fished both lakes and rivers in southern Oregon. After moving to Northern California, Andy's attention turned to fishing for steelhead primarily in the Rogue River, the Trinity River, and the Klamath River. Andy moved to Arizona for the 3rd time in 2021 and became full-time in Show Low just last year. Andy's focus since returning to Arizona has been on fishing the lakes in the White Mountains but looks forward to learning some of the rivers in the White Mountains this year.



forward to
creeks and
Mountains

WMFFC MISSION STATEMENT:

The Mission Statement of the White Mountain Fly Fishing Club is: "To assist in the development and maintenance of fly fishing opportunities and to promote and participate in fly fishing in its many forms."

We support the practice of "Catch and Release." We support the use of barbless hooks and harmless netting-and-release practices. Fish should never be held out of water for longer than you can hold your breath.

Please look this link up—your president asked me to put this in all newsletters.
<https://freeemergencycontactcard.com/>

White Mountain Fly Fishing Club Board—2025-2026

President:	Mike Whitney	(541) 390-5389
Past President:	Barry Curseaden	(623) 398-5242
Vice President:	Gary Hall	(480) 510-6362
Secretary:	Kitty Wiemelt	(480) 329-6996
Treasurer:	Marcie Greenberg	(480) 993-4623
Board Member at Large:	Andy Rybolt	(541) 281-2011
Board Member at Large:	Gary Miller	(602) 478-0883
Board Member at Large:	Margie Dennis	(602) 203-6414
Board Member at Large:	Jon Wallace	(480) 694-9865
Membership Chairman	Marcie Greenberg	(480) 993-4623
Conservation and Community Projects Chairman:		Unfilled
Education Chairman/Banquet:	Gary Miller	(602) 478-0883
Newsletter Chairman/Website:	Kitty Wiemelt	(480) 329-6996
Speaker Chairman:	Andy Rybolt	(541) 281-2011
IFFF Representative:	Gary Hall	(480) 510-7381
AZG&F Liaison	Larry Kivela	(480) 695-5162
Inventory Chairman	Scott Dennis	(602) 339-7518