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Sustaining Donor



Wil Huett, Rocky Mountain Flycasters President and Lifetime Member of TU

From our President

Let's talk about beginnings and endings.

Though the fishing season began some time ago, and hopefully won't end anytime soon, other efforts are just beginning. Much of the conservation work which makes good fishing possible is really just beginning now as the snow-pack has melted and runoff ended. Chris Kennedy's work in the high reaches of Rocky Mountain National Park is a prime example. Dave Piske's **Conservation Notes** in this issue has more details. Many of our members have been proud to

participate in Chris's work over the years. You can find out how to volunteer for his and many other conservation projects in Dave's column or by going to our new **Volunteer Opportunities** section, also below or accessible in the **Table of Contents** to the left of my photo. Pick at least one volunteer activity and *"Give A Day Back to the Fish"* who have given you so many hours of pleasure.

Great job again Camp Director **Dennis Cook!** And thanks to all the volunteer mentors who make it work. More details and photos can be found under **August Youth Outcome Notes** below or by clicking on the **Table of Contents** to the left of my photo.

I had the wonderful opportunity to fish in Canada in June with two of the founding fathers of Rocky Mountain Flycasters: Kevin Burkhart, original board member and longtime newsletter editor and first editor and first RMF President Pat Beauchamp. Kevin and Pat (pictured below)



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Wil Huett, Kevin Burkhardt and Pat Beauchamp at Bee Lake in Ontario, Canada

were instrumental in the beginnings of this chapter in 1983 when it became the 10th chapter chartered by TU. We had a great time fishing in NW Ontario and I even caught a couple of trophy smallmouth. I am told Pat has a video of me catching one on a fly, but I haven't seen it yet. These two, and others, left the proud legacy which is our chapter today. If you remember them, or simply want to thank them for starting what

is now recognized as an important voice in the local conservation community, put a comment on our **RMF Facebook page** and I'll alert them to take a look.

Ironically, almost at the same time of our trip, we lost one of our longtime leading lights, Dr Ron Sheets. "Doc" Sheets was a man who wore many hats, and who wore them exceptionally well. Our family of conservationists and fly fishers will miss him almost as much as his blood family. You can find a more complete tribute to this remarkable man on our **home page**. Rest in peace Doc, and may fishing in the River Styx be even better than in your beloved Big Thompson.

The open comment period concerning the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on the NISP (Glade Reservoir) project began in June and ends Sept 3rd. You can comment as an individual, and rest assured, your elected board is looking at the issue to determine if a chapter sponsored comment is appropriate. The Colorado Water Institute offers a **short video about the basics** of the process through the CSU Office of Engagement. The actual Army Corps of Engineers info can be found at the **Corps site**.

Don't forget our regular schedule of monthly meetings begins in September, on the **I6th** to be exact. Program Chair Domingo Rodriguez is lining up more top guides, authors and authorities to teach us where and how to reap the rewards of our conservation work, i.e., catch fish. Keep up to date on all chapter activities on our **calendar**.

One final request: In an effort to improve the way we communicate with you, *The Flypaper* Editor Bob Green and the Marketing and Communications Committee would like to know the type of electronic device on which you are reading this version of the newsletter. So, I'm asking you to click on the link below (Electronic Device Poll) and respond to the single question (one) asked. Thanks for your help!



Text

Tight lines and full nets,

Wil Huett, President Rocky Mountain Flycasters

Chapter Event Calendar

News From Trout Unlimited National Headquarters



In June, Trout Unlimited released its first "State of the Trout" report, the most comprehensive analysis of native trout species in the United States ever published. The report, compiled by the TU Science Team, offers in-depth analysis of the status of these fish, the threats they face, and what's being done, and must be done, to keep them around for generations to come. Read the **report** or the summary.

David's Lines: A Flypaper Column



David Cunningham, The FlyPaper Columnist

"I am an Englishman who is very happy to live in Colorado. I am semi-retired from the business world and have renewed my interest in writing. Some of my pieces will relate to actual events, others will be fiction. (My friends tell me I have trouble knowing the difference.) The "David's Line" column will feature the mysteries of our sport, restoration, and the pleasures of good company. Let me know whether or not these stories are worth reading. Life is short—go fishing first "

—David Cunningham.

In his initial Flypaper column last month (**July**) David described the experience of being excited by our sport while simultaneously encountering fear, and then describing to a partner or spouse "how the day went" for us. In his August column below, "Finding a River", David reflects on fishing the Wild and Scenic Poudre and soon forgetting how this magnificent outdoors gem is not far from a busy road.

Finding a River

I arrived in Colorado in 1992 and my first compelling impression was the forty miles of beauty that the Poudre River presented to a Californian's eye. I had done some fly fishing in California and it did not take long before I had a routine of driving miles west in search of places where the river broke away from the road so that I could fish in tranquility. This narrow selection of locations made me irrationally irritated that the road builders had failed to carve a path as far as possible from the water's edge in order to provide privacy for this pampered city boy with a stick and a hook. A few years ago this single irritation with the river was eliminated and I think that the cure is worth reporting.

section of the river that is a prime location, half mile off of the road, but 20 miles up the canyon. The morning was still damp and cool and I was relaxed about the 45 minute drive because of a guide's recent assurance that trout keep banker's hours and don't eat until the water warms to 56 degrees, so you can have an extra cup of coffee and never miss a fish.

Like any fly fisherman driving up the canyon, my eyes flicker frequently from the road to the water,

watching for the ripples that identify trout taking their lunch from the surface of a pool but I had no real expectation that morning of seeing any rises as I drove beside the river. However, as I approached Poudre City where the river is a series of linked pools, I caught a glimpse of three successive rises. And, by sweet karma, as I passed the spot a lay-by appeared. In a reflex action I stomped on the brakes and slid neatly into a perfect parking site. In a few minutes I had pulled on my waders, hitched my fishing vest, and rigged my three weight rod with a dry fly known to resemble nothing a fish had ever seen, and therefore likely to tempt the more adventurous of those fish I had seen splashing in the pool. I plodded back down the road into the heavy on-coming traffic that would have deterred me if I was not excited by the prospect of fishing a hatch. I found a small path and scuffed and scrambled down ten feet of the bank and then made a stealthy approach through some brush and a couple of Buick sized rocks. I eased to the water's edge and the magic of a hatch sent a nice ripple through my nervous system.

The rises were occurring every 30 seconds. Some were sips, a few others were loud strikes. I stripped ten feet of line and flipped the fly out into the back of the pool. It drifted towards me and was ignored by both of the fish that snapped some invisible insect on either side of the Royal Wolf. I cast again a little further into the head of the pool and in my haste I messed up the cast and the line slapped the water. For two minutes all action ceased. I cursed my clumsiness but let the cast drift and as it passed me heading downstream the feast began again. Two more casts, that did not resemble a 747 landing, failed to elicit any interest from the resident trout. I forced myself to begin again, pausing to scan the water looking for the source of the fish buffet. I noticed that the surface held a few tiny blue insects. I was not good enough at entomology to identify flies, and larvae, and emergers, but I think I have the world's biggest box of flies. I knew that somewhere in there was a small bluish thing. I found one and tied it to the leader as fast as my trembling fingers would allow. I knew that a hatch like this could be over in twenty minutes and it had already been going on for half an hour.

Re-equipped, I cast delicately to the nearest edge of the pool. The fly swirled in an eddy and sailed towards me. It passed close to a light colored rock slab that allowed me to see a I2 inch trout rise through the clear water to take the fly. The fish showed a flash of rouge as it rolled on its side—and rejected the offering. Ten more casts at various spots in the pool failed to induce a strike. Then, across the pool, a serious slash of scales and fins smacked at and missed a fly ten times the size of the microbes I had seen on the water. I strained to see what size and shape this one was and got a measure of it just before the fish rose again and took the sampler. From where I stood the fly looked like a caddis, but there were none in the air and none on the water. Still there had been some loud strikes among the sips and perhaps two hatches were in play. My small blue fly had suffered humiliating rejection, so why not try a caddis? Another frantic search in my treasure box and a racing bout of knotting gave me a new offering.

This time I moved myself into the water and slowly positioned myself to line up with the path of the incoming stream. My intrusion did not spook the pool and the sipping continued. I took a few false casts to get my fly into the near side of the feeding lane and this time my cast laid the fly softly. I stripped the line to match the drift. And—bang—a rainbow rose and took the fly with a noisy strike. I set the hook, lifted the rod above my head and stripped to keep the tension on. I soon got him on the reel and drew him to me. He took one flashing jump, shaking his head and barreling off to the head of the pool. The rod made a perfect bow, and held him on a run for a few seconds. I admired his strength but steady pressure drew him to the surface and I pulled him in. I maneuvered the rod behind my back to get him close enough to scoop him into the net—and he was mine—to enjoy for that brilliant moment when you see the beauty of this finest of creatures. He stayed quiet in the submerged net and it was easy to release the lip-set hook. I used a hand to steady him, head first into the stream and he was gone.

I straightened up and drew a deep satisfied breath. I looked over the pool noting the light, the ripples, and the clarity of the water and the beauty of the stones that I was standing on. It was perfect.

And then I realized that I was fishing thirty feet from a road full of roaring trucks, pick-ups and RVs but down here they were irrelevant and almost non-existent. Being ten feet below the level of the tarmac was enough to eliminate the distraction. In this place I was alone in a Zen zone if I chose to embrace it. From that moment on I have had no need to travel further than any spot on the river that had a fishable pool or riffle. I had found the lower Poudre River beneath my nose.

Ten feet down from the road, twenty feet out. You are free to fish, to sit and watch, or just throw stones. Once you are by it, on it, or in it, you can let the river give you the space you need—from the Prospect bridge to the top of the canyon. If you look, you might just find a river a bike ride from home.

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Dave Piske, Conservation Chair

August Conservation Notes

August finds us with an abundance of conservation news and opportunities:

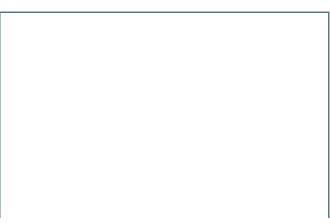
In the first article (below) I briefly summarize efforts by Colorado Parks and and Wildlife Biologist Ben Swingle to tag trout for research purposes. Read the article and learn how you can help—by fishing! In the second article you will find a summary of the work scheduled this summer by US Fish and Wildlife Services Fish Biologist Chris Kennedy. You can also help Chris with some of his work by fishing! The third article describes and puts you in touch with opportunities to learn more about stream restoration through attending workshops put on by the Coloradoan Stream Restoration Project. In a final article Phil Wright of the RMF leadership team tells how you can help with restoration of the North Fork of the North Thompson.

1) You caught a trout wearing a tag in the Big Thompson? Tell Ben Swigle.

Ben is the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Aquatic Biologist for several streams along the northern Front Range, one of which is the Big Thompson River. He is tagging trout there for research purposes in the vicinity of Drake.

The tags on these fish will be either bright yellow or orange, as shown below, about 1.5 inches long, and placed near the dorsal fin of the fish. Each tag will have a number between 1 and 200.

If you catch one of these tagged trout, please notify Ben (office phone 970-472-4364, or email **Ben Swigle**. Tell him where you caught the fish, its tag number, and any notable physical conditions or deformities observed. Please





describe the trout's location relative to nearby structures, landscape features, or Highway 34 Mile-Marker number, whichever most clearly describes the location.

2) 2015 Fish and Wildlife Service/Rocky Mountain National Park Fisheries Field Work Schedule

This annual field work, lead by Chris Kennedy, the US Fish & Wildlife Service Fisheries Biologist assigned to Rocky Mountain National Park, is an unsurpassed opportunity to visit backcountry wilderness you might not otherwise get to see. The detailed schedule, which began this week and extends into early October, is posted on the **RMF Web site**.

Additional volunteers are still needed the week of August 10, and the following is Chris' detailed description of the first two weeks in August:

Lawn Lake: The first week August 3-7 we will just catch as many fish as possible by hook and line. The 2nd week August 10-13 we will continue with the hook-and-line capture the first two days. On the 3rd day we will go up to Crystal Lake and conduct a gill net survey and on the 4th day we will conduct the recapture in Lawn Lake with a gill net. I would be willing to work the weekend if people are interested and can only make it over the weekend.

We will be camping out for this project and volunteers will need to bring all their own gear, although we do have some to borrow if needed. The hike to Lawn Lake is 6.2 miles with a 2200 foot elevation gain. The hike up to Crystal from Lawn is 1.5 miles with a 700 foot elevation gain.

Caddis Lake gill net survey: The typical route, via the Ypsilon Lake trail, is 5.5 miles with a 2400 foot elevation gain. However, the Ypsilon Lake trail bridge over the Roaring River is out because of the 2013 flooding so we may need to go up Ypsilon Creek off trail. We will see what the conditions are as the project gets closer.

To volunteer for any of the projects on the full schedule, you should register as a volunteer by emailing **Austin Condon**.

3) Learn about modern practices for resilient restoration of flood-damaged rivers

A group of stream restoration professionals has informally banded together to produce a series of free workshops under the name "Colorado Stream Restoration Network" (CSRN). These workshops are open to the public, and the Network's invitation is: "Join us if you are part of a coalition, municipality, private landowner, concerned citizen, or technical expert". That doubly covers all of our readers, first as

concerned citizens, and again by Rocky Mountain Flycasters being a member of two coalitions; the Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed and the Big Thompson River Restoration Coalition. When registering for the workshops, you will not be asked about your affiliation, but you will need to register at eventbrite in order to have a seat.

The goal of the CSRN is "to raise awareness for each of us working in and for Colorado streams on what each area of expertise entails and when it is needed. Reducing the unknown while increasing the comfort level with topics that we don't understand is a great way to bring down barriers to working together".

"At the three remaining workshops you will learn what engineers look at when they conduct stream analyses...what are they solving for and why, what tools do they use, and what tools are new and can be leveraged together in new ways to improve stream restoration projects."

Their next workshop is on Wednesday, August 12 from 9 am to 12:30 pm in Longmont, CO. This workshop will cover Hydrology & Hydraulics (H&H). **Registration is required** to attend.

The remaining 2015 workshop dates and topics are:

Thursday Oct 1: fluvial geomorphology and sediment transport.

Thursday Dec 3: stream ecology, habitat structure and function.

Registration for these two workshops is not yet open, and the subject matter may be changed, but consider the dates to be firm.

4) UPDATE!

North Fork Big T Restoration Project - Volunteers Needed



Chris Carroll, Fisheries Biologist with the Arapahoe Roosevelt Nation Forest has emailed me that the water in the North Fork of the Big Thompson has finally come down and we should be able to begin to work in and around the stream in the upcoming weeks. To kick things off and rev up our efforts, I am now asking for volunteer co-leaders to assist me in leading volunteer teams to put some finishing touches on the stream restoration work that has been carried out on the North Fork.

Please **contact me** if you are interested in becoming a co-leader on this project. I expect to be able to organize some informational training concerning the project. You will likely learn a good deal about stream restoration as part of your efforts. The photo below shows the state of the river in early July with heavy flow and gives an idea of the work and wading conditions on the North Fork as water levels come down. It has been suggested that we organize small volunteer crews to work on specific reaches along the North Fork and perhaps combine a morning's volunteer work with a stream side lunch and an afternoon of fishing in the Estes Park area. Weekday as well as weekend volunteer dates are certainly possible. Another person has suggested that this project would be a great family oriented volunteer opportunity for families with children, 11 years and older. Again, please contact me soon if you would like to contribute to this effort as a co-leader or volunteer. Further details of specific work dates will be coming soon.

—Phil Wright

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Update: Project Healing Waters

Rocky Mountain Flycasters supports the local **Project** Healing Waters Fly Fishing program through fly tying and casting classes and fly fishing outings for local military veterans. The mission of Healing Waters is to provide rest, recreation and rehabilitation for Veterans. Many of our TU members have assisted in our weekly fly tying classes last spring. Thanks.

For veteran fishing trips, PHW provides equipment, mentors, transportation, secures arrangements and manages logistics. RMF members can assist as mentors. Our destinations are commonly to top quality public and private waters, thanks to their generous owners, and provide very memorable and therapeutic experiences for our vets. Does this interest you?

A regional organization, called the "Veterans to David Morse, RMF Project Healing Waters Coordinator Veterans Alliance Association", is being formed to



consolidate the efforts of the local area PHW Chapters, such as our Platte River Chapter, from Cheyenne to Greeley. The Alliance will be based in Windsor at donated office space at the Water Valley/Pelican Lakes Country Club, and will be the focus major fundraising and larger PHW events. RMFC is considered an affiliate organization to the Alliance. Our PHW efforts will get support from the Alliance.

A major charity fund raiser for the Alliance will be held on Labor Day, Saturday, Sept. 5, 2015, and will include a golf and fishing tournament, and a Big Tent BBQ at the Country Club/Island Center at Water Valley. The Fishing Tournament has an Open and a Pro division with prizes for each species of big fish and method of catch. Fishing is from shore in the stocked and maintained lake which contains aggressive trophy-size Tiger Trout, Black Bass, and Wipers. Bring your 7wt rod to land these monsters. A breakfast for tournament players kicks off the day at 7:00 a.m. preceding the golf and fishing tournament. Registered golfers and fishermen will be given tickets to the 3:00 p.m. BBQ and awards ceremony. If you just want to watch the tournaments and enjoy the BBQ, individual tickets will be available. For additional information and registration for this charity event, please visit the Alliance

website: http://www.wycovets.org/#!wyco-Ist-annual-celebration-4-vets/clzt

For questions or to volunteer to be a RMF/PHW fishing mentor or to help with our winter and spring PHW fly tying classes, contact **Dave Morse**, RMF Project Healing Waters Coordinator.

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Volunteer Opportunities

- August 12 Colorodo Stream Restoration Network Steam Restoration Workshops;
 https://www.eventbrite.com/e/colorado-stream-restoration...
- August 16 Phantom Canyon Trail Maintenance and Fishing
- September 5 Veterans to Veterans Alliance Association
- September 12 Big Thompson Lower North Fork Revegetation with WRV
- September 19 Larimer County Boys & Girls Club Day for Kids Festival
- September 26 Big Thompson Lower North Fork Revegetation with WRV
- September 27 Phantom Canyon Trail Maintenance and Fishing
- October I Colorodo Stream Restoration Network Steam Restoration Workshops;
 https://www.eventbrite.com/e/colorado-stream-restoration...
- October 10 Big Thompson Lower North Fork Revegetation with WRV
- October 31 Big Thompson Lower North Fork Revegetation with WRV
- December 3 Colorodo Stream Restoration Network Steam Restoration Workshops;
 https://www.eventbrite.com/e/colorado-stream-restoration...

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Let's Go Fishing



Mark Miller, Let's Go Fishing Coordinator

2015 RMF Trips

In August we will fish the headwaters of the Colorado River on a trip hosted by Dennis Cook. Another August trip, to fish The Loch in Rocky Mountain National Park, was cancelled because of lack of interest. To sign up for these trip, as well as other trips for the remainder of the year, **click to signup** and indicate your trip and we will get in touch. If you have previously signed up for a trip and

we haven't contacted you, please give me a call (970-744-8229) or send an email.

Fishing Trip Report: The Poudre and Joe Wright Reservoir

What a great day! Hopefully we all get one or two days each summer like our day at Joe Wright Reservoir, on June 27th.

Seven of us (David Morse-trip host, Gil Coleman, Bill Ottino, Ed McConnaughey and his wife, Fermor Black, and Mark Miller) met in Ft. Collins and made the long, winding drive up Poudre Canyon, fishing the Poudre just below the hatchery, from 10am to about 1pm. The water was nice and clear, but still so high and fast that it made fishing very difficult. Only three or four trout were netted, but the canyon was absolutely beautiful—so green as a result of all this spring's moisture.

Sticking to our plan to fish Joe Wright the second half of the day, we hit the lake at about 2 pm, and re-rigged our rods with wet flies and a small split shot, or a beadhead fly, and headed to the inlet area.

What a great sight to behold, as the main inlet stream was loaded with fish getting ready to spawn, as well as a second small stream. Of course, fishing in the stream is not allowed until July 1 st, so we fished the lake inlet area where the stream's current was still evident, and also loaded with grayling. The area was crowded with fishermen, but we all managed to spread out and enjoy the fishing.

I was very pleased with the size of the grayling—lots of fish were in the 13-14 inch range. And that huge, colorful dorsal fin was a sight to see, almost turning to a neon blue-green when the sunlight hit it from just the right angle. According to the state fisheries folks, about 50 female lake trout, and a few tiger muskie, were stocked a few years ago because the grayling population was severely overpopulated and stunted, with fish only reaching about 8-9 inches long. Sure seems like it worked!

It seems that the grayling took just about any fly we tossed out, as long as it was not on top. Most rods were constantly bent from 2 pm until we finally called it a day around 6-7 pm, and headed down canyon for some dinner. Dave Morse had the best luck—and the "secret" fly which he gladly shared with us (a large beadhead nymph tied on a jig hook).

This would be a great place (and time of year) to take a friend who is just learning to fly fish. I'm thinking this spot is going to be added to my annual fishing calendar for late June each year! I can't wait to do it again! Click on the image of Gil at the right to view a 3 minute video of the trip and our fish!



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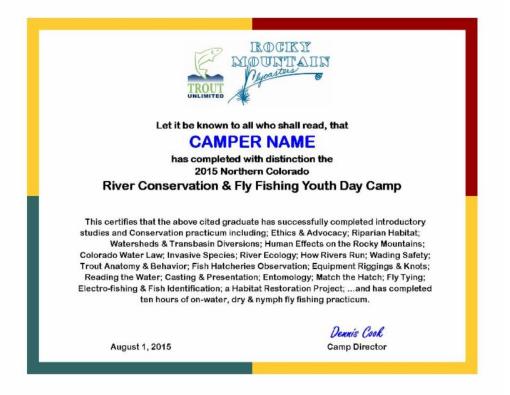
August Youth Outreach Notes

Sixth Annual Youth Day Camp A Huge Success!



2015 Graduates and Mentors of the 2015 RMF Day Camp

July 27th through August 1st was a glorious Colorado weather week—and also another successful **River Conservation & Fly Fishing Youth Day Camp.** Fourteen youths were accepted into this year's camp, but the total quickly became a full dozen as two youths had to withdraw due to unexpected family considerations. Each youth who completes the camp receives a camp diploma (photo below) acknowledging their camp curriculum accomplishments, and also a complete TFO rod/loaded reel/case ensemble so they can continue to reinforce the new skills they've learned. Our hope is that each camper will remember their experience and perhaps eventually enjoy fly angling as a lifelong pastime, but more importantly will also better understand the need to develop a natural outdoors ethic and as adults become an active coldwater conservationist.



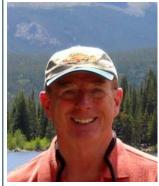
RMF members are also to be congratulated. This year we achieved a high of 31 volunteer camp Mentors, about a 20% growth from previous years. "Many Thanks!" to those who shared their time, knowledge, skills and commitment to help encourage development of these next generation coldwater conservators. It has also been another grand opportunity for us to meet and get to know each other better as members of our RMF/TU family.

RMF Volunteer Mentors (32):

Rodney Albers, Todd Anderson, Ross Barton, Katie Beamon, Donna Burrill, Bob Castner, Dennis Cook, Cullen Emsing, Lee Evans, Amy Galyardt, Dennis Galyardt, Scott Gould, Bob Green, Dave Handshue, Wil Huett, Dick Jefferies, Linda Jefferies, Alan Jones, Scott Kemp, Kevin Mabry, Ed McConnaughey, Tim Meyer, Mark Miller, Dave Morse, Adam Omernick, Jerry Pelis, Tom Thomas, Paul Wehr, Stan Woodring, Phil Wright, Coy Wylie, Ben Zomer.

Guest Practitioners:

St. Peter's Fly Shop Guides: Kyle Stack, Joel DeJong, Connor Murphy, Neal Warner Colorado Parks & Wildlife: Aquatic Biologists: Ben Swigle & Kyle Batigge Aquatic Invasives: Eric Coe Hatchery: Jesse Faue CSU Entomology Dept: Boris Kondratieff, Ph.D. Natural Resources Conservation Service: Conservationist: Sam Adams Colorado TU Advocacy Outreach: Stephanie Scott



Dennis Cook, Youth Outreach Chair

Major Sponsors & Previous Years Guest Practitioner:

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