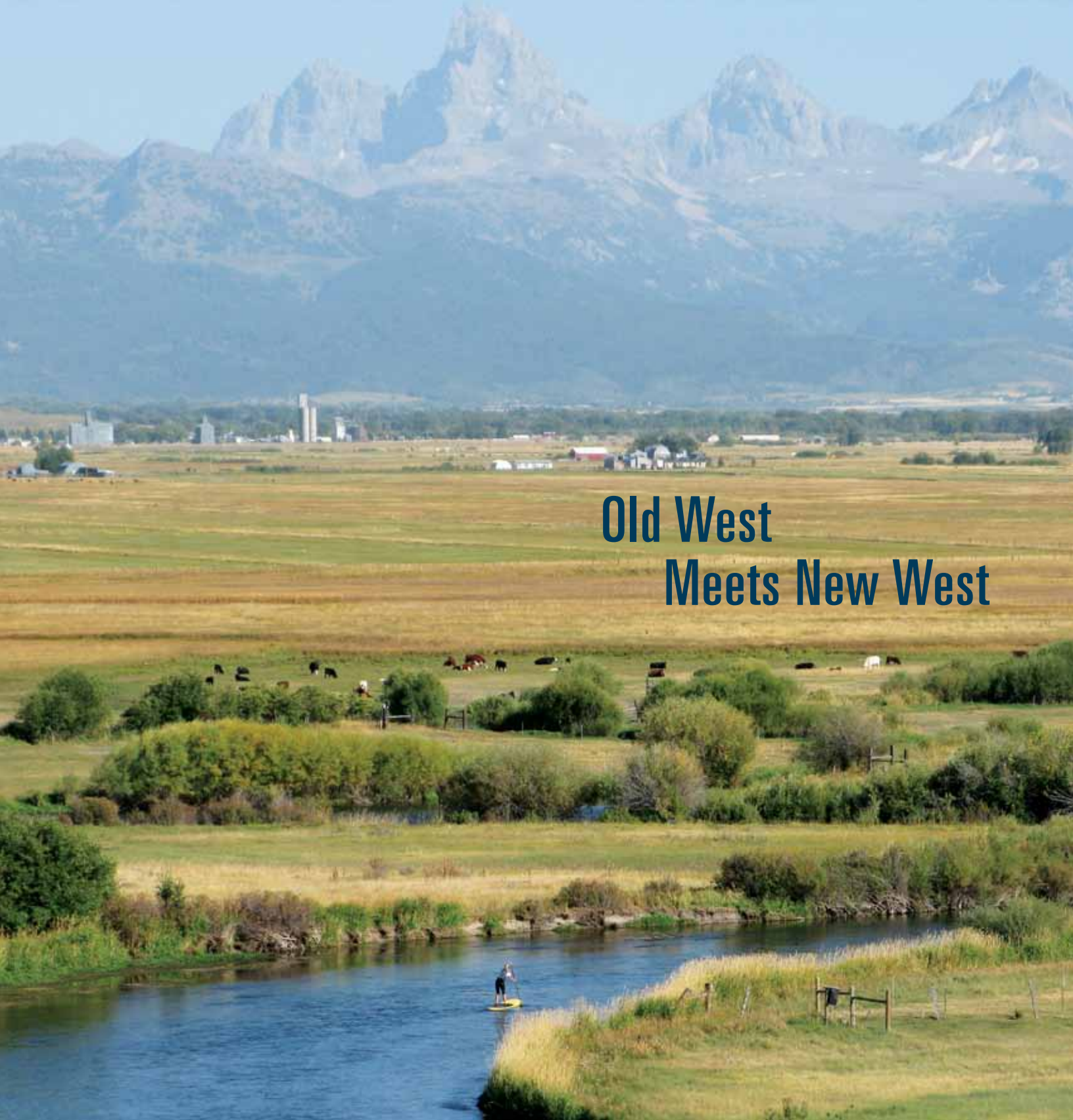




# water lines

SPRING/SUMMER 2012

## Old West Meets New West





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Cover Photo: Jennifer Price uses a new mode  
of river transportation; a stand-up paddle  
board. Photo taken by Gary Price.

#### Friends of the Teton River

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Driggs, ID 83422

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www.tetonwater.org



## From Our President

**I learned to fish from my grandmother.** She taught me to cast and tie knots, but the real learning came from tagging along with her when she fished. The only rule was no talking. So I learned to observe. I watched my grandmother, watched the creek, watched fish, found snakes, made little boats out of rosehips, and sometimes I just watched the inside of my eyelids. It wasn't until years later that I realized all the skills I had learned on those too few fishing outings: observation, respect, creativity, and appreciation.

River stewardship is very similar. Over the past twelve years FTR has methodically assessed the health of our watershed using cutting edge technology as well as anecdotal evidence imparted to us by longtime residents. We gather information and create solutions to the issues we encounter, guided by both scientific reason and social evidence. Crucial to our success has been willing participation from landowners, donors, and volunteers, and the gift of perspective from the old timers.

We have a myriad of challenges ahead of us. Water storage projects that could jeopardize fish are still in the headlines, the potential listing of YCT looms, and restoration of Teton Creek and other critical river habitat is ongoing. This upcoming summer FTR is focused on meeting these challenges with proven methods, along with respect and appreciation for the stories of this watershed. Community buy-in to our efforts is vital to our success, and it's just as important for us to sit back, listen and observe.

When fishing and confronted with a challenge today, I often think about what my grandmother would have done. I rarely come up with the solution she would have... it's hard to throw a Jake's Spin-a-Lure with a fly rod (tried it)! But I do use the skills I learned while watching her fish. And ultimately, no matter the outcome, I remember Grandma's most important lesson: always come up with a good story. I look forward to seeing everyone this summer on the river or at FTR functions and swapping stories.

—Kim Keeley, FTR Board President

**SNAPSHOTS ABOVE** Kim Keeley as a youngster (left) and her grandmother (right) who shared her own love of fish.





**ABOVE:** Mountain man gondolier Tom Fenger poles a modern day John Boat.

**BELOW:** Originally just 18 inches in width, these long, slender, flat-bottomed boats were easily built from wood and poled rather than paddled.

# Putting a Boat in the Same River Twice

by Adonia Ripple

**Stories of trappers and rivers teaming with muskrat, beaver, otter, and mink abound when you start to look through the old annals.**

Many early settlers in Teton Valley trapped to subsist and sold their pelts to the large fur companies. To get into tight waterways, and nose into willow stands to set and check traps, narrow maneuverable boats were needed. Originally just 18 inches in width, these long, slender, flat-bottomed boats were easily built from wood and poled rather than paddled. As fur bearing creatures dwindled, settlers found other ways to make a living.

When a dude from New York arrived at the Victor train station in 1919 looking for a fishing guide, it was young Alma Kunz who was at the ready, and the trapper's John Boat became the now iconic Teton River watercraft. This also marked the beginning of fish-guiding on the Teton. According to Lyle Kunz, Alma's son, his father built the first decent John Boat that was Teton River worthy. Alma's Lodge (now Teton Valley Lodge) quickly became known as the place for out-of-towners to stay and fish, and Teton River John Boats were crafted to meet the growing need.

**The wooden boats were built with tongue and groove, and grain sacks were used to create a tight fit.**

The wooden boats were built with tongue and groove, and grain sacks were used to create a tight fit. Sealed with paint, the boats were easy to build. Lyle can still build a John Boat in two days. Always built locally, now the boats are made from fiberglass, but retain their elegant form. As longstanding Teton Valley Lodge guide, Tom Fenger notes, "The Teton River Boat (John Boat) provides the stealth required to meet the challenges of the Upper Teton River. The boats were lengthened over the trapper's version to allow two fly fisherman to fish comfortably at the same time."

Noticeable is how the John Boats are poled. When not using the outboard motor, guides push and walk the boats with long poles like mountain man gondoliers. Lyle recalls poling a boat from Bates Bridge back to the Lodge into the wee hours of the night, when the State briefly closed the Teton to motors, leaving the upriver movement of the John Boats to pure muscle.

Carrying forward a form from another function, the timeless shape of the Teton River John Boats serves as a reminder of how people have adapted over time to make a living from the river. Whether laden with furs, or fishing gear, the sleek John Boat is at home on the Teton. It's stood the test of time, and reminds us of our connection with an era-gone-by.



# Making Water Work on a Changing Landscape

By Sarah Rupp

**The West was forged on the backs of strong, resilient men and women, people who pinned their dreams on hard work, self-sacrifice, and struggle.** Their creativity and perseverance allowed them to carve out a living in wild, unforgiving territory. I often wonder about those hardy souls. What were they thinking as they forged their way West? Were they overwhelmed by the beauty of the things they saw and inspired by possibility, or were they scared of the unknown and frightened by the solitude? What kept these early dreamers going and what did it take to keep them alive?

One thing goes without question—water was critical for the survival of the early settlers, and is woven into their stories. Locating clean water for people, stock, and crops, and avoiding water-related hazards were critical to staying alive. Teton Valley's settlers certainly

**Teton Valley's current inhabitants face new challenges. Unlike the early pioneers who were tasked with forging a civilization out of an abundant landscape, this generation is tasked with managing scarce resources for countless competing interests.**

wrestled with these challenges and, consequently, water is closely knitted to the history of the area. Not only did water define how people carved out a living by dictating where people settled and what crops were grown, but water also became part of the heritage and culture of this place and, as such, is intricately tied to the heart of its inhabitants.

Hiram Lapham and his family, the first permanent white settlers of Teton Valley, arrived in 1882. They found a valley which was virtually untouched. Having

been previously occupied only by trappers and seasonally by the Shoshone- Bannock Indian Tribes, it was teeming with grouse, large game animals, and trout. Hiram's family settled at the north end of the valley. Within six years of their arrival, several dozen other families arrived, giving rise to small settlements along most of the major tributaries including Horseshoe, Twin, South Leigh, Darby, and Fox Creeks. By April of 1888, when Gideon and Alice Murphy moved to Teton Valley, all but the south end of the valley, along Trail Creek, was occupied.



Gideon and Alice scheduled their move to Teton Valley with crops in mind and immediately set to work carving out a place for themselves. They planted simple crops which would sustain their family and began hauling timber out of the south hills to build log cabins. Then, with the help of a few other families, they began to work on removing sagebrush to make fields and building a canal to divert water from Trail Creek. The canal they built began at the base of Teton Pass, just as Trail Creek enters the valley, and runs west toward Pine Creek Pass. They named this the String Canal, and themselves The String Colony because they were “strung out” along the canal. The String Colony, and the friendships forged on the banks of Trail Creek, left a lasting legacy. The String Canal is still used for the irrigation of crops to this day, and members of The String Colony, along with subsequent settlers, ultimately founded the town of Victor.

Teton Valley’s current inhabitants face new challenges. Unlike the early pioneers who were tasked with forging a civilization out of an abundant landscape, this generation is tasked with managing scarce resources for countless competing interests. In the case of water, we face the challenge of providing sufficient water supply for a booming agricultural economy, a dwindling native fish population, and emerging industrial and municipal needs.

Historically, agriculture and conservation have not seen eye to eye. For decades throughout the West farms and fish have been pitted against each other, each perceived as threatening the interests and values of the other. It is now clear that one cannot be pursued to the detriment of the other; communities cannot trade agriculture for conservation, or conservation for agriculture. Instead, we must support agricultural producers while enhancing conservation values. And we must do this by identifying and using workable,

practical solutions.

Friends of the Teton River is committed to this goal. By working hand-in-hand with landowners on a voluntary basis, Friends of the Teton River identifies ways

to keep lands working and rivers flowing. Through a partnership with the Idaho Water Resource Board and Idaho’s Water Transaction Program, financial compensation is available for temporary in-stream water leases and permanent transfers, replacement fees for lost production, funding for irrigation efficiencies, and source water changes. In all cases, we ensure the protection of a landowner’s water rights.

The modern day challenge faced by Teton Valley is daunting. But if the past is any indication of the future, this community will find success. Teton Valley’s early settlers, like those of The String Colony, have shown us what it takes to succeed—drive and foresight, the ability to collaborate with neighbors over a common goal, and perseverance in the face of adversity. I am confident that by building on the success of the past, and integrating a few modern day practical solutions, this community will find a path into the future.

**To learn more about opportunities for keeping agricultural lands in production and restoring water in streams please contact Friends of the Teton River’s Water Resources Director, Sarah Rupp, at (208) 354-3871.**

**One thing goes without question—water was critical for the survival of the early settlers, and is woven into their stories. Locating clean water for people, stock, and crops, and avoiding water-related hazards were critical to staying alive.**

**BELOW:** The long standing String Canal.





# Then and Now

## A fishy story of our valley through the last century

By Quincy Liby

**Verl Bagley notes the beginnings of Teton Valley's fishing story in his book, *"Thursdays with Verl"*.**

Verl's grandfather would place his young daughter (Verl's mother) on the roof of their house so she could watch Blackfoot Indians fishing on Trail Creek. When the supply of fish and berries was exhausted, the Blackfeet would move on, allowing their quarry to replenish itself until the next season's harvest.

Near the turn of the twentieth century, Teton Valley's population grew rapidly. In order to sustain the early settlers, the valley's waterways were asked to give more than they ever had before, in the form of irrigation. Herculean efforts were made to dig miles of canals, which diverted life-giving water to crops and livestock. However, these changes had the unintended consequence of dewatering the streams that the valley's abundant native fish, the Yellowstone cutthroat trout (YCT), relied on for spawning and survival.

With the arrival of more new people came even greater changes for the valley's rivers. In 1920, the Teton Rod and Gun Club stocked 30,000 rainbow trout fry to the Teton River, introducing the valley's first non-native fish species. Idaho Fish and Game continued to stock the Teton





River with non-native fish to increase trout numbers until 1994. While these new fish were welcomed by anglers, they further exacerbated the problems for YCT. Fingerling brooks, which hatch in the fall, feed on and compete for food and space with the smaller, spring-hatching YCT. Rainbows occupy the same spawning areas as YCT during their critical spawning period, resulting in competition and hybridization.

In 1976, the Teton Dam was built in the canyon of the Teton River. While the dam lasted less than a year before its catastrophic failure, its impacts could have been immeasurable.

When a running stream is turned into a reservoir, the size of the trout increase, but total numbers decline and diversity within the population is reduced. Stocking likely would have continued, in an effort to bolster the reservoir's populations, pushing YCT further toward hybridization and extinction. Ralph Sewell, of Sewell Auto, recounts catching mackinaw (lake trout) above Hog Hollow after the dam collapsed. Ralph said they "were excited to have some mac's in that reservoir—they must have planted the fish as soon as the last tractor left the dam."

The collapse of the dam returned the canyon to its riverine condition, albeit with a funny waterline some 200 feet above the channel. Today, fishing in the canyon is one of the most sought after adventures in our area, combining class IV whitewater, breathtaking scenery, and abundant fishing. Curt Hamby of World-Cast Anglers, a guide on this famed stretch, tells us, "it's always an adventure, but well worth the time

**With the arrival of more new people came even greater changes for the valley's rivers.**

and effort."

Curt also encourages folks to try lower sections of the Teton below the canyon. "These sections see half the pressure of the upper river, with great fishing and less people. Who could resist?" Be careful, though—rattlesnakes like this area too!

Despite the challenges wrought by history, I am constantly amazed to float or wade the Teton and see the large number of YCT that still call the river home. Proof can be found on the Teton Valley Lodge website, which boasts thousands of YCT caught every year on the Teton. Big fish in a small stream—what a wonderful equation! Considering its size, the number of fish supported by the Teton is truly incredible. In reflection, this should be paramount in our yearning to keep the river healthy.

There are many challenges that still face the Teton and its YCT, including restoring stream flow, mitigating disease, reducing hybridization, improving water quality, and restoring habitat. But there is visible resiliency as thousands of people fish and recreate on its waters every year, and the fishery continues to adjust. There is vitality in the ever changing Teton River, and FTR will continue to work hard for the future of this unique resource.



Photos clockwise:

Abundant harvest of fish in the early days: Library of Congress

Author Quincy Liby and a good day on the Teton: Kim Keeley

Mayfly translates to food for lots of fish: Kevin Emery.

Electrofishing to survey populations on the Teton: FTR.

Bruce Smithhammer casting for lunkers: Kevin Emery.

# More than a Century of Watershed Education

By Amy Verbeten

**The Teton River has played a role in education in this valley since the early days.** In fact, the Teton Basin's first school was located on the west side of the Teton River (then called the "Pierre River"), near the Foster Bridge Crossing at the mouth of Darby Creek. The first written account of this school is by Mr. William Ross Sandy, who was hired to teach a summer term for 37 students in the summer of 1892. In his accounts, Mr. Sandy indicated that "due to the deep snow, cold winters, and the great distance pupils had to go, they did not have school in the Basin in the winter, but had a summer term."

As more settlers moved to the valley throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, numerous small communities were established. Each of these communities

was centered around a building that typically served as both an LDS church and a school. Because these early settlers' ability to survive depended on irrigated agriculture, many of the communities, and resultantly the schools themselves, lay near the banks of tributary streams including Fox, Teton, Darby, and Leigh Creeks. Accounts from students and teachers mention hauling water from the creeks to the school house for drinking and washing.

Despite this early connection to water, it took more than a century to establish a formal Watershed Education Program in Teton Valley's schools. FTR Founder Lyn Benjamin began working with 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Barbara Agnew to create the popular Stream Study program that every student in Agnew's classroom has participated in since 2001.

What began as a small-scale program in a single elementary school has grown to serve over 500 Teton Valley children of all ages. FTR has also expanded our offerings to reach adults in our watershed. Education Director, Amy Verbeten facilitates stake-

holder groups of individuals representing agricultural, development, government, homeowner and conservation interests, who are actively involved in monthly planning meetings to meet the goals of their sub-watershed.

FTR's success in implementing watershed education in the Teton Basin has led to increasing demand for our educational model. In January of 2011, FTR was awarded a generous, \$110,000 grant from the MJ Murdock Charitable Trust, which will allow us to expand our successful Watershed Education program over the next 3 years. The first step in this process has been to hire Anna Dwinnell as our Watershed Education Programs Coordinator who will join the staff in June. We look forward to the next 120 years of education on the banks of the Teton River.



**ABOVE:** Students at Pratt School near Teton Creek in present day Alta, Wy. **AROUND:** Students take a firsthand look at everything from macro invertebrates to streamflow in FTR's Watershed Education programs.



# Summer Calendar

## Annual Fisherman's Dinner

JUNE 1, 6-9 PM, TETON SPRINGS RESORT

Join us for an elegant evening of fine art and dining at the Teton Springs Resort in Victor, Idaho. A live and silent auction will feature river artwork, fly fishing packages, trips, and more. All proceeds from the evening will benefit Yellowstone cut-throat trout habitat and the Teton River fishery. Please reserve your tickets in advance, as space is limited. \$150/couple.

## Fishing Guide's Night

JUNE 14, 6-9 PM, KNOTTY PINE SUPPER CLUB

Area fishing guides are invited to join us at The Knotty Pine for free beer, gear, food, fishin' flicks and river talk with Friends of the Teton River. This evening will get you stoked for the upcoming season.

## 12<sup>th</sup> Annual River Party & Auction

JULY 7, 5-9 PM, LOCATED JUST SOUTH OF THE TETON VALLEY LODGE

River folks of all ages are invited to join us on the banks of the Teton River as we celebrate another year of science and conservation. Our annual family-style picnic features live music, a BBQ dinner, kids' activities and a silent auction. \$15/person, \$5/youth and kids 6 and under are free.

## Non-profit Night at the Pub

JULY 11, 5-8 PM AT GRAND TETON BREWING COMPANY

Join four of your favorite Teton Valley non-profit organizations at Grand Teton Brewing in Victor, Idaho for an evening of family fun. FTR, TRLT, TVTAP, and VARD staff will be cooking up brats and pouring beers, all for one great "Non-profit Night at the Pub." The brewery will donate 30% of its daily sales to these organizations through the Tin Cup Challenge.

## 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Tin Cup Challenge

JULY 21

This is the community event of the summer! Show your support for Friends of the Teton River and other Teton Valley non-profits by running or walking in the Tin Cup Challenge race events, or enjoy the fun and interactive booths in the Driggs

City Park. Hosted by the Community Foundation of Teton Valley, the Tin Cup raises funds for over forty non-profit organizations that serve our great community.



## Full Moon Float

AUGUST 30

Share a potluck dinner on the banks of the Teton River, and then watch the moon rise as you float from the Rainey Fish and Game access to the Cache Bridge on Packsaddle road. Participants must provide their own watercraft. Assistance with shuttling vehicles is provided. This event is free, but please sign up in advance. Event time and details TBD. Call FTR for sign-up and info, 208-354-3871.



*Long before you bite the dust,  
Please put the River in your trust.*

**By making a planned gift to Friends of the Teton River, you are leaving a legacy for the next generation of river stewards to follow in your footsteps.**

**And they will have large wading boots to fill.**

FTR can help you determine the planned and estate giving options that are right for you.

Help us ensure lasting stewardship of the Teton River.

**PLEASE** contact Anna Lindstedt, Development Director or Adonia Ripple, Executive Director 208-354-3871



# Annual Report 2011

**Friends of the Teton River raised \$401,326 in total revenue and support in 2011**, with the majority of its funds (79%) going to on-the-ground projects and programs including stream restoration, stream flow restoration, water quality and fisheries monitoring, and watershed education and outreach. The remaining funds were spent on administration, management and fundraising. 2011 revenues were derived from federal and state grants (42%), foundation support (11%), support from individual donors (39%), and income from programs, events, and interest (8%).

Friends of the Teton River strongly believes in fiscal responsibility and accountability to its membership, project partners and the general public. This report reflects FTR's financial position as of December 31, 2011. You may contact FTR for a copy of our 990 or our 2011 Financial Statement and Independent Auditor's Report, which was prepared by Galusha, Higgins & Galusha, P.C.



## REVENUE AND SUPPORT:

### Public Support:

Memberships and Donations	\$154,593
Foundation Grants	\$ 45,000
Special Programs and Events*	\$ 31,089

### Other Support:

Federal & State Grants Assistance	\$169,931
Merchandise Income*	\$97
Interest and Dividends	\$616

**Total Revenue and Support** **\$401,326**

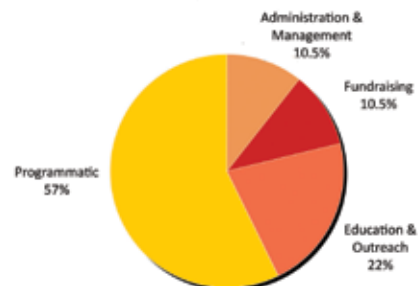
## 2011 Income - \$401,326



## EXPENSES:

Programs	\$234,095
Education & Outreach	\$87,956
Fundraising	\$43,436
Administration	\$43,322
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$408,809</b>

## 2011 Expenses - \$408,809



**2011 Change in Net Assets\*\*** **\$ (7,483)**

**2011 Total Net Assets at End of Year** **\$ 84,278**

\*represents net income in these categories

\*\*the negative change in net assets is due to grants promised, but not yet received as of year-end.



## Thank you to our grantors who made our work possible in 2011

### Teton Creek Restoration

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

### Trail Creek Restoration

One Fly Foundation  
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
US Fish and Wildlife Service

### Stream Flow

Confluence Fund  
One Fly Foundation  
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Patagonia "World Trout Initiative"  
Jim and Cheryl Rienerts

### Fisheries Monitoring and Research

Bonneville Environmental Foundation  
CHC Foundation  
Teton Springs Foundation  
John Short, PhD

### Education and Outreach

Donald C. Brace Foundation  
MJ Murdock Charitable Trust

Targhee "Protect our Winters" Grant  
Silverstar Communications  
US Department of Agriculture  
Western Native Trout Initiative  
Teton Valley Chapter Trout Unlimited

### Water Quality

Teton Conservation District  
Community Foundation of Teton Valley

## Thank you to all our 2012 Donors\*

Barbara & David Agnew	Chuck Iossi & Tina Culman	Julie Robison & Dave Hensel	Lucey Electric	Liz Pitcher	Michael & Julie Stalneck
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	Kent & Judy Hastings	Dr. Ivo & Ms. Baerbel Lucchitta			Joyce & Felix Zajac

\*Our apologies for any errors or omissions. Please contact FTR with any changes.



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discover more at [www.tetonwater.org](http://www.tetonwater.org)

## FTR Staff Back in the Day

Can you match the FTR staff member with the photo from their younger years?

Quincy Liby

Mike Lien

Anna Lindstedt

Adonia Ripple

Sarah Rupp

Amy Verbeten

A



B



E



C



F



D



Answers:  
a. Amy  
b. Adonia  
c. Mike  
d. Anna  
e. Quincy  
f. Sarah