

The Fish Tale

May 2026 Newsletter

Gunnison Gorge Anglers

Colorado Trout Unlimited
Fly Fishers International



President's Message

Dear Gunnison Gorge Anglers Members, Volunteers, and Friends,

Unfortunately, this year has been the lowest recorded snowpack in Colorado dating back to 1930. In late April, Blue Mesa reservoir was only 40% full, some 16 feet lower than it was at this time last year. Runoff projections are only 30 to 40% of normal, one of the lowest levels ever recorded. Gunnison river flows through the Black Canyon are expected to be between 300-500 CFS throughout the spring and summer with a possible 1-day 900 cfs peak flow later this May. Let's all keep our fingers crossed for rain.

No one knows for certain what this all means for fish and fishing in the coming months. But some of the things to look out for include:

- **Water Conditions:** Low snowpack and reduced flows will result in a rapid and short runoff, lower and longer periods of base flows, and higher water temperatures and altered bug hatches. Freestone (unregulated) rivers will be the most impacted, like the San Miguel River. Regulated rivers and tailwaters, like the Lower Gunnison and Uncompahgre below Ridgway Reservoir, should see less impact.
- **Summer Outlook:** Fishing will be best in the early morning hours, as trout suffer stress when temperatures exceed 65°F and risk mortality above 68°F. Target higher elevation streams with lower water temperatures. Focus on early morning trips to avoid afternoon heat and, consequently, protect fish from high mortality rates. Keep fish wet and practice proper trout handling techniques.
- **Hopeful Indicators:** Some forecasts suggest a potential shift in global weather patterns away from La Niña, offering hope for better moisture later in the year.

Upcoming events to attend:

- **Fishing outing to Cerros Summit Reservoir:** On May 16 from 10 am until 2 pm, join new Board member Abel Sanchez for a fun, family-friendly fishing outing to Cerro Summit Reservoir. This reservoir is known for its cutthroat and tiger trout, and also has healthy rainbows. Cerro Summit is just east of the entrance to Black Canyon National Park on Highway 50. The reservoir is a short, uphill hike from the parking lot. Your Colorado fishing license covers entry into the State Wildlife Area.
- **Troutapalooza Online Auction, May 10-20.** Troutapalooza is the fundraising and promotional engine for Gunnison Gorge Anglers. Visit our website to learn more about our projects and why fundraising is important. This year's online auction features exclusive local and international guide service trips and several elite rods and reel outfits. It's a great way to experience some amazing fly-fishing trips to unforgettable locations while supporting river conservation in southwest Colorado. Visit www.troutapalooza.com to preview and bid on auction items. And save the date for the September 23rd live event featuring an International Fly Fishing Film Tour showing.
- **Annual 4th Grader's Natural Resources Festival.** The Annual 4th Grade Natural Resource Festival in Montrose, CO, is a major educational event held on **May 12th** at Riverbottom Park, engaging hundreds of local students in hands-on

conservation education. Hosted by the [Shavano Conservation District](#), it features booths from over 20 organizations focusing on watersheds, fish and wildlife, and land stewardship. GGA will host a booth in cooperation with the Uncompahgre Watershed Partnership which focuses on watershed health and ground water pollution.

- **Trout in the Classroom fish release, Paonia.** Members of the public are cordially invited to join the 7th Grade Trout in the Classroom Release Event on **Tuesday, May 12th** at 1 pm at Paonia River Park. This event is the culmination of a year-long journey of hands-on learning. Throughout the year, students have studied water quality, local ecology, and the importance of the North Fork watershed.

Whether you are a member of the Gunnison Gorge Anglers Chapter or not, you're welcome to attend or participate in any of these events!

Enjoy the summer and I hope you make time to get out on a river or lake near you.

Yours in conservation,

John Hamill, President
Gunnison Gorge Anglers
Hamilldsrt50@msn.com

Upcoming Events

- **Troutapalooza Online Auction - May 10th-20th** Information and auction at [this link](#). *The live event will be held September 23rd at the Sheridan Opera House in Telluride. Silent and live auction, door prizes, food and drink, and IF4 showing.*
- **4th Graders Natural Resource Festival - May 12th** Riverbottom Park, Montrose
- **Paonia Trout in the Classroom Release - May 12th** Paonia River Park
- **Fly Fishing Outing - Saturday May 16th** at Cerro Summit Reservoir east of Montrose with Abel Sanchez [register here](#)
- **Delta Outdoor Heritage & Safety Days - June 6th** Confluence Park in Delta
- Check out the Project Healing Waters newsletter for more events
- Flies & Lies is on summer break, returning in September or October

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<https://gunnisongorgeanglers.tu.org/>

Projects and Current Events

Gunnison Gorge Anglers has a new logo! And we have a few more surprises coming your way this summer. Thank you to In Design Signs in Montrose for their creativity and professionalism.

Thank you to all who attended and supported the Colorado Trout Unlimited Rendezvous last month. And congratulations to Brent Curtice as he steps into his new role as Vice Chair for the CTU Council.

Want to host a fishing outing? Let us know! Send us an email to gunnisongorgeanglersctu@gmail.com with Fishing Outing in the subject line. The chapter will accommodate snacks, beverages, and some flies. You are not expected to teach fly fishing, just explain how you like to fish that water and have fun.

Connect with Gunnison Gorge Anglers

Facebook: [Gunnison Gorge Anglers](#)
Instagram: [@gunnisongorgeanglers](#)
Website: <https://gunnisongorgeanglers.tu.org/>
Email: gunnisongorgeanglersctu@gmail.com
Newsletter Submissions: [Google form](#)
CTU Event Calendar: <https://coloradotu.org/events>

THANK YOU SPONSORS



Gunnison River Expeditions
 8949 Pleasure Park Rd
 Hotchkiss, Colorado
 970-872-3232



-Service Fly Shop serving the greater Montrose Community
 Gunnison River, Uncompahgre River, Cimarron River
 1325 Mayfly Dr. Montrose CO 81401 - www.montroseanglers.com
 970249-0408 - info@montroseanglers.com



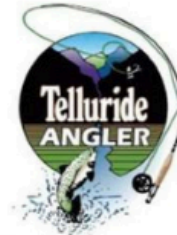
RIGS Fly Shop
 1075 Sherman Street #101
 Ridgway, Colorado 81432
 Phone: 970-626-4460



Ed's Fly Shop
 432 E Main St
 Montrose, CO 81401
 970-372-2395



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 1101 Mayfly Dr
 Montrose, CO 81401
 970-249-0606



Telluride Angler
 121 W. Colorado Ave
 Telluride, CO 81435
 800-831-6230

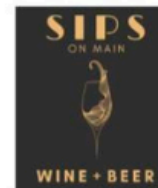
Silver Basin
 Brewing
 147 N 1st St
 Montrose, CO
 81401
 970-249-8689



CB's Tavern
 334 Main St
 Delta, CO 81416
 970 399-3570



Ross Reels
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 Montrose, CO 81401
 970-249-0606



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 215 W Main St
 Cedaredge, CO 81413
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