



NEWSLETTER

wmflyfishingclub.com

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



PRESIDENTS COLUMN – JUNE 2026

Greetings, well 2026 is almost half over as we go into June. Amazing how time flies when we are having fun. Gary Miller and Scott Dennis hauled our club trailer over to Scott's house for a refurbishing: Rewired the lights, repaired some roof spots, replaced wheel bearings and did a complete inventory of the contents. Amazing how much "stuff" we have for club trips.

Our 1st club trip for 2026 was down to Willow Springs with the trailer and 12 of us from the club. We BBQed hot dogs and hamburgers after several hours of fishing. As always, there was plenty of food as attending members brought all sorts of goodies and salads. Those present had a good discussion of flies, methods and modes of watercraft. I was very interested in those who had an electric motor set-up on their pontoons. Something I am looking into after a hard row off the lake with a good wind and aching shoulders.

Those attending the outing had a discussion on a June trip, several suggestions were made, but after Everett Craig's presentation at our May meeting, **it was suggested we try Hawley Lake on the Reservation** as it is one of three lakes that are spring fed and in decent shape. More on the date later as we also discussed a different day of the week for trips. This will be a topic at our June meeting. I got into my fly-fishing library and reread and reviewed Denny Rickard's Lake Fishing books. Now I must get busy and create a lake fly box of his patterns and others I am aware of, such as Jim Teenys pheasant tail flies, which he designed for high mountain lakes in Oregon and our own John Vassel's favorite lake flies and let's not forget John Rohmer's creations. They have all been very successful with their specialties.

I am looking forward to our monthly trips and fishing in new waters!!

Tight Lines, Mike W – Your President

June 17, 2026.

Held at White Mountain Nature Center

425 S. Woodland Rd. Lakeside—5:30 raffle and chatting

Speaker: Bryce Sisson, Manager, Tonto Fish Hatchery.

Topic: Hatchery Production, Stocking, Species, and the Health of the Fish Populations

Hatchery Production, Stocking, Species, Sizes

June 17, 2026

Join Guest Speaker

Bryce Sisson, Tonto Fish Hatchery

The hatchery provides fish to the lakes throughout Northern and Eastern Arizona, but primarily the Payson/Mogollon Rim area. Bryce has managed the hatchery for 12 years and has worked for the Game and Fish Department for 20 years. Bryce has a degree in Biology from Northern Arizona University. He is also responsible for AZGFD's Early Life Stage Apache Trout Production and all of the state's Tiger Trout and Brook Trout production. Like the White Mountains, the Mogollon Rim has suffered from a multi-year drought. That drought has presented Bryce with some challenges at the hatchery and he will be sharing those impacts with us as well as the Department's responses to those challenges.

Bryce lives with his family in Payson. He started fishing at age 5 and today his favorite places to fish are Reservation Lake and Roosevelt Lake. Let's welcome Bryce to the White Mountain Fly Fishing club meeting.



Your Best Chance at That Trout Happens Earlier Than You Think

Hooked On Fly Fishing subset

Most anglers waste their best opportunity before they even realize it existed

They walk too close Cast too quickly Rush the drift

By the time they finally “dial things in”...

The fish is already alerted, pressured or gone.

Here's the truth guides understand

Your first few casts are your highest-percentage casts.

Not your tenth

Not after changing flies three times.

The first.

Because that's when:

- ♦ The trout hasn't seen you
- ♦ Your drift lane is untouched
- ♦ The presentation feels natural

If you learn how to approach water strategically instead of emotionally, you'll start catching fish faster—and with far less guesswork.

On the Firehole I caught thirty-six inches worth of trout-in six install-ments.

Arnold Gingrich - in a letter to me (c. 1971)

Fishermen are born honest, but they get over it.

Ed Zern—To Hell with Fishing (1945)

Most Missed Fish Happen Before the Hookset

Hooked on Fly Fishing Subset

The real mistake usually starts earlier than anglers think

When anglers lose fish they usually blame the ending

Bad hookset Too much slack Wrong angle

And sometimes that's true

But a lot of missed fish actually begin *before* the trout ever eats.

The Drift Sets Everything Up

A trout decides whether to eat long before you react.

It notices:

♦ Speed Direction Movement Tension

Tiny things.

And when something feels slightly off....

Fish often refuse at the very last second

The frustrating part? Most angler never even realize it happened.

“Almost Eats” Are Still Information

One of the most overlooked parts of fly fishing is this:

A fish that *almost* eats is telling you something useful

Maybe your drift was too close. Maybe your depth was nearly right, but not right on.

Maybe your fly passed just inches outside the feeding lane. You weren't completely wrong. You were just slightly off. Small adjustments matter more than most people realize.

Why Good Anglers Improve Faster

Experienced anglers pay attention to reactions-not just catches.

A flash beneath the fly. A subtle movement. A hesitation. Those moments tell a story.

An instead of immediately changing everything...

They refine.

That's a huge difference.

Final Thought

A missed fish isn't always failure. Sometimes it's the river telling you:

“You're close. Pay attention.”

“Willow Springs Outing”

May 22, 2026



Fun was had by all

Tuesday—June 23—Hawley lake
Same as June, bring a snack for Pot Luck

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.

SAVE THE DATE!! Annual Fundraising Banquet July 18, 2026, 5:00 PM · Hon-Dah Casino

The club's annual fundraising banquet is at Hon-Dah. Dinner, raffles, and auctions support club conservation and education work. Tickets are available to buy at the June meeting. Board members will have them available.



Price is the
Same as last year—\$50.



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
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