

Eric Anderson, Owner

Big Horn River Fly Fisher

I graduated from the snoopy pole to the fly rod at the age of 5 and haven't done much else since. Spending much of my youth unsupervised near Pine, Colorado on a small creek and a little pond is what shaped my life that revolves around this great sport. Bouncing around fly shops throughout high-school, all of a sudden I found myself in a college classroom for what I perceived as a tragically terrible waste of time.

A constant anxiety that I was wasting away under the fluorescent lights of the classroom led me to work on a web based booking agency. This booking agency grew into an online advertising service with a goal of allowing outfitters and guides to be compared in an apples to apples format rather than just the quality of their web designer. I had my first booth at the Denver Fly Fishing Show at the age of 18 and my youth was viewed accurately as ignorance, but it's really the ignorance that allowed me to keep plugging away towards eventual success.

My second year in college I sold the business and by the time the ink dried there was an empty dorm room, a really full truck, a pink raft, and a cell phone full of irate messages from my very reasonable parents as I sped north for the Crow Indian Reservation where I had fallen in love with the Bighorn River. I spent my entire paltry payout on the down payment for a restaurant and motel that had been closed since the day the owner died 5 years prior. From visions of grandeur, humble beginnings, fist fights with drunk cooks, and perseverance I have come to the point you'd be hard pressed to find too many outfits in Montana that put as many boats on the water. I am proud to have matured in this industry by reinvesting every possible penny along with local community bank loans, not interest free angel-investments that make competing in this industry so difficult and disheartening for the many that prefer to have a sense of ownership and accomplishment.

I want to help AFFTA in continuing on their path of uniting this clique laden industry. "A rising tide lifts all boats" and our industry is really watching the shoreline very closely these days. I personally want to assist in shrinking that generational gap in fly fishing. At 27 years old and I am hard pressed to find peers out on the water let alone working in the industry. My generation just isn't present yet, but they have a disproportionately large amount of disposable income. Fly Fishing will always be the sport of gentlemen, but as gentlemen we need to feel more of a responsibility in teaching our sport to those yet to be enlightened. The steep learning curve and the initial investment combine to create a sport that many will only dabble with. I've seen what triggers the transformation between a dabbler and an avid fly fisherman and it is usually not much more than a few good tugs and good company in a majestic setting. It's a pretty special feeling knowing you sparked a lifelong passion simply by bringing someone along for the day.