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NEWS RELEASE - For Immediate Release

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Henry's Fork Foundation awarded Nonprofit Excellence Award

ASHTON - The Henry's Fork Foundation, celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, has been recognized for its accomplishments by the Idaho Nonprofit Center in Boise.

HFF Executive Director Brandon Hoffner and former board chairman Mick Mickelson, accepted the award at the INC's 11th annual Idaho Statewide Nonprofit Conference in Boise Sept. 23.

The Henry's Fork Foundation was one of six nonprofit organizations from around the state, chosen from a field of 100 nominees. "The awards spotlight the enormously important roles of thousands of nonprofit organizations across Idaho that make a difference every day," according to a news release from the Idaho Nonprofit Center. INC represents the interests of the 4,800 charitable nonprofits in Idaho and their 48,000 employees and 400,000 volunteers.

"We appreciate the recognition of our efforts to keep the Henry's Fork healthy and productive," said Hoffner. "We were the only conservation organization among the recipients and want to thank the INC for the award."

The Henry's Fork Foundation, based in Ashton, employs seven people and utilizes volunteers from among its 3,000 members and organizations such as Idaho Master Naturalists and Boy Scouts of America. Summer interns from six major U.S. colleges and universities work on research and restoration projects throughout the Henry's Fork Watershed.

The Foundation's sole purpose is to conserve, protect and restore the unique fisheries, wildlife, and aesthetic qualities of the Henry's Fork and its watershed.

In the past year, the Foundation has begun a multi-year project to install water quality monitoring equipment through the watershed to track data about dissolved oxygen, sediment, phosphorus and temperature. Four of the Sondes were installed this summer, and three more will be installed over each of the next two years. The data will allow the Foundation and other organizations and agencies to identify and mitigate potential risks to wild trout growth and survival for decades to come.

The Foundation has been instrumental in improving fish passage at the Buffalo River Dam near Pond's Lodge and at the Chester Dam where a newly installed video camera will allow

remote monitoring of the fish. Genetic analysis and tagging allow the tracking of individual fish to determine the contribution of the Buffalo River to the wild trout population of the Henry's Fork. With the completion of the fish ladder at Chester Dam this year, fish are able to move freely up and down the river through the Chester Dam for the first time since the dam's original construction 70 years ago.

The Foundation is also studying the habitat preferences of adult rainbow trout, specifically through Harriman State Park, that will provide information needed to ensure optimal summer habitat.

HFF has participated in major stream restoration and rehabilitation on Sheridan and Fish Creeks and on the Henry's Lake Outlet, returning those streams to their original channels. Miles of fences have been installed and are maintained to prevent damage to river and stream banks by livestock.

The Foundation partnered with the Fremont-Madison Irrigation District 20 years ago to form the Henry's Fork Watershed Council, which facilitates cooperation among conservation organizations, government agencies, and water users throughout the watershed.

Through its Trout in the Classroom and Youth on the Fly programs for youth, the Foundation has begun educating fifth-graders about the benefits of health rivers and the fun of fly fishing. This year, the program also reached out to the mothers of the youths.

The Foundation has helped to protect wintering trumpeter swans, clean up trash along rivers and highways, install monofilament recycling and wader washing stations, and study the economic benefits of the fishing industry to the area economy.

The 2014 INC Honorees are:

North Idaho Small: Panhandle Animal Shelter, Ponderay
North Idaho Large: Lewiston Library Foundation, Lewiston

Southwest Idaho Large: Family Advocates, Boise
Southwest Idaho Small: Spay and Neuter Idaho Pets (SNIP), Boise

East Idaho Large: Henry's Fork Foundation, Ashton
East Idaho Small: Idaho Horse Therapy, Shoshone

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