



June 21, 2018

NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

Contact: Jamie Laatsch
(208) 652-3567

Henry's Fork Foundation hosts Grand Opening for new HFF Community Campus

ASHTON – The Henry's Fork Foundation (HFF) – a non-profit focused on conserving, protecting, and restoring the fisheries of the Henry's Fork watershed – officially moved its offices in August of 2017, but the project has been more than three years in the making.

The 16,000 sq. ft. Main Street landmark in Ashton, ID was originally built as the Ashton Hospital in 1950. In 1988, the hospital was converted into a nursing home and a few years later became storage units when the new senior living center was built across town. The building remained, used for storage, until June of 2016 when it was purchased by HFF.

Renovations of the old hospital building began in December of 2016 and HFF staff moved in to the completed office space in August of 2017. Since then, renovations have been ongoing with the construction of the intern dormitory and graduate student suites in the north wing, the installation of new equipment in the multi-purpose science laboratory, and the design of the Henry's Fork Country Interpretive Center.

The Interpretive Center takes visitors through exhibits from "Local History, Agriculture, and Hydropower" and "Fly Fishing on the Henry's Fork" to "Hydrology and Water" and "Aquatic Ecology and the Web of Life". The campus also features a collaborative conference center, staff conference room, and visitors lounge.

On June 14th, HFF hosted a Grand Opening for the building, now called the HFF Community Campus. The 200+ visitors toured offices, enjoyed two freshwater aquariums, and took a float down the Henry's Fork using HFF's new virtual reality drift boat experience. A 10-minute virtual reality video has viewers enjoying the scenery, catching fish, and even flying over Mesa Falls in a drone.

The Community Campus project is a look to the future. The new campus increases HFF's ability to fulfill its mission by educating future generations of anglers and farmers about the watershed; increasing participation in regional and state-wide water management issues to benefit the Henry's Fork; improving and increasing water quality monitoring capabilities; and expanding outreach and communication to inspire conservation on the Henry's Fork.

This building not only allows HFF to connect to the local community in a whole new way, but provides a greater capacity, through an interpretive center, collaborative conference center, laboratory, and housing for future scientists, to face the challenges that lie ahead and take advantage of new and exciting opportunities in conservation. The Henry's Fork Foundation received generous grants from the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust and CHC Foundations to make the renovation work possible. HFF also received crucial support from numerous private individuals who saw the vision for this new Community Campus.

#####