

THE VOICE OF THE RIVER



Henry's Fork Foundation

SUMMER 2015

Water-Quality Network Expanding to New Sites

After a successful first year of monitoring the Henry's Fork upstream of Ashton Reservoir, HFF will expand its water-quality monitoring network into the lower watershed this summer.

HFF will install automated instruments (called "sondes") near Ora Bridge, St. Anthony, and Salem-Parker highway, complementing those installed in 2014 at the Flatrock Club, Island Park Dam, Pinehaven, and Marysville.

The sondes record temperature, dissolved oxygen, depth, dissolved solids, turbidity, chlorophyll, and blue-green algae at 15-minute intervals. At each sonde site, staff regularly collects water samples, which are analyzed for phosphorus and suspended sediment concentrations.

The results from field sampling will be used to develop statistical relationships between constituents that cannot be measured by the sondes and those that can, so that in the future, the sonde data can be used to infer information

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Robert Dotson, left, and Rob Van Kirk gather samples for a study of the health and diversity of invertebrates in the Henry's Fork watershed.

HFF Begins High-Tech Sampling of Aquatic Insects

By Rob Van Kirk
HFF Senior Scientist

Aquatic invertebrates—the insects and other spineless critters that trout eat—have long been used as indicators of water and habitat type in streams.

Invertebrates are excellent indicators because each species has different habitat requirements and different tolerances to physical and chemical sources of degradation. For example, mayflies, stoneflies, and caddisflies are very sensitive to the effects of organic pollutants, such as detergents, petroleum products, and pesticides. On the other hand, midges are more tolerant of these chemicals. Thus, a good indicator of organic pollution is the abundance of mayflies, stoneflies, and caddisflies divided by that of midges. A high value of this ratio indicates little degradation by these types of pollutants.

Aquatic ecologists have developed what are called "invertebrate metrics," numerical scores derived from the number and types of invertebrates present in a particular sample. These invertebrate metrics complement the chemical and physical parameters we are measuring with our water-quality monitoring network to give a complete picture of the health and productivity of our streams and their ability to support wild trout.

However, the high cost of processing invertebrate samples has hindered our ability to use them as indicators of water and habitat quality over long periods of time and across numerous sites—until now.

In the past, the only way to process invertebrate samples was to pick through them by hand—one individual at a time. A typical sample from the Henry's Fork might contain more than 1,000 individual invertebrates. Counting

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Looking for a Good 2015

And a rain dance or two wouldn't hurt

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The weather of 2015 has been out of sorts here in Last Chance. To say that "March came in like a lion and went out like a lamb" isn't nearly correct. Lions were nowhere to be found. March came in even gentler than a lamb, which brought about some of the earliest spring fishing since the regulations changed a few years back.

Midges and BWOs have made conditions on the water too tempting for locals to ignore, and have even encouraged some visitors from out of town to have an early "cabin check" or a take break from a generally disappointing season of skiing. The bugs, coupled with a lack of snow, have made prowling the banks to do some trout hunting a proposition not easy to pass up. While all of this is great for local businesses, it raises some concern for future water flows.

The early spring hasn't put a damper on expectations for the fishing this upcoming summer, however. The success anglers have already experienced indicates plenty of healthy fish in the river, and hatches have been significant enough to be optimistic about the number of bugs that will be bringing our rainbows to the surface. The presence of healthy fish and hatches indicate to me that last winter's flows were enough to keep a good thing going.

While it appears we will be looking at early summer flows similar to last year, I will expect an early salmonfly hatch this season. Without the good bank habitat available in years of higher flows, be ready to fish the middle of the river, and position yourself accordingly. Even with the low flows of last spring, there were some memorable hatches of green and brown drakes in June. Fishing was generally good in 2014, and let's hope this trend continues in a flow year that will likely be similar to last.

Any dances, prayers, or other voodoo to get some much needed moisture in the drainage would be much appreciated, and don't delay getting in on some of the early season action which may be some of the best in recent years.

—Jon Stiehl
HFF Board Member



The Henry's Fork Foundation, with funding from Fremont County, IDFG, and HFF members, purchased this property at the Del Rio Bridge east of St. Anthony to be developed as a permanent recreational access to the Henry's Fork. The property belonged to the family of the late Harris "Huck" and Betty Moon of St. Anthony. See story on page 7.

Changes on Tap at HFF

Change is in the air at the Henry's Fork Foundation: Changes in staffing, the intern program, and more.



Tim Maurer

Tim Maurer joined the Foundation in January as financial and human resources manager, succeeding Joan Rice, who retired after 14 years with HFF. Tim has been a valued asset as a volunteer at Henry's Fork Days and other events. He contracted with HFF to close out selected grants projects in 2012. Tim brings project administration experience, attention to detail, and event management credentials to

HFF after a 26-year career in the U.S. Air Force and eight years of Civil Service. During his military career, Tim spent more than 13 years overseas, including tours in Korea, Guam, Germany, England, Norway, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. Tim is a novice fly fisherman but enjoys the rowing aspect of fishing. Tim is also a distance runner, having completed 60 marathons and counting. Tim and wife Julie live on their ranch near the Henry's Fork.

Thacia Schmidt, who came to the Foundation last year as recipient of the Byers Memorial Scholarship, started work full time in mid-April as conservation technician. She worked part time all winter while continuing her studies at BYU-Idaho, where she is a wildlife major.

The Foundation conducted a multi-state search for a post-graduate research associate to assist in analyzing data from HFF research and restoration projects. Melissa Muradian, who will graduate in June with her MS in quantitative ecology and resource management from the University of Washington, will start a one-year appointment July 1.

Zach Kuzniar will return for his third summer at HFF to write his masters thesis about the adult trout habitat study he conducted in the Harriman State Park stretch of the Henry's Fork. He is a graduate student in biology at Grand Valley State University.

Interns this summer are Christina Morrisett from Stanford University, who will graduate in June with a B.S. in earth systems; Natalie Smith from Colgate University, who is finishing her sophomore year as a geology major; Maya Epelbaum from Washington and Lee University, funded by the A. Paul Knight Scholarship, who is finishing her junior year as a psychology major, with an environmental studies minor; and Abi Cano of Ashton, this year's recipient of the Byers Memorial Scholarship and a junior at North Fremont High School, who wants to pursue a career in wildlife studies.

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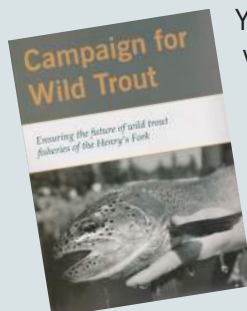
By Brady Taylor
Conservation Fund Director

A Charitable Gift Annuity is a tool that can be used to benefit the Henry's Fork Foundation and to invest safely with a predictable return.

How does it work? It's relatively easy. Once you are 62 or older, you give a gift of cash, securities, or other assets to HFF. It then goes into an annuity that pays out a guaranteed interest rate to the beneficiary (usually you and/or your spouse). At your death, HFF receives whatever is left of the original sum, usually 50 percent

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You should consult your financial adviser, accountant, or attorney to make sure a gift annuity works best for you.

Please contact Brady Taylor at brady@henrysfork.org if you have any questions. Or visit henrysfork.planmylegacy.org.



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Member Profile: Jim Carter & Jane Harrison

Jim Carter and his wife Jane Harrison have been members of the Henry's Fork Foundation for 15 years, but they have been spending time in Island Park and the Yellowstone area since they were children. Jane's great-uncle and great-aunt Oscar and Carrie Friendly built a cabin in the North Fork Club in the early 1940s.

Jane remembers trips to the North Fork Club with her family and later trips to "the river" with her best friend Vicky Gibbons (now Hoagland). Jim's family have long-time friends who have had a cabin on Hebgen Lake since the 1960s, and he too remembers idyllic summers in the Yellowstone area.

Those traditions have continued, and Jim and Jane still spend time at the North Fork Club with John and Vicky Hoagland and dozens of other friends in Island Park and West Yellowstone as often as they are able.

Jane retired after a 28-year career with the Williams Companies, first in the legal department and then as a manager in the business group. Jim is in the "process" of retiring from Logan Simpson Design, an environmental and community-planning consulting firm in Salt Lake City.



Jim and Jane currently live in Holladay, Utah, where they both grew up, and are active in the HFF and a number of other community and charitable organizations. Jim is in his second year as chairman of the HFF board of directors.

"We are proud of our support for and involvement in the work of the HFF and look forward to a lasting relationship," Jim says.

Water Quality Network . .

Continued from page 1

about a wide range of water-quality parameters.

During 2015, HFF will also be collaborating with several agencies to focus intensive water-quality sampling at Island Park Dam to identify the cause of high-turbidity events observed immediately downstream of the dam each of the past few summers.

This study will pair a water-quality sonde on the west side of the river with our existing sonde on the east side. In addition, we will sample water quality at various depths in the reservoir immediately upstream of the dam.

HFF's water-quality program monitors ecological processes and physical properties of water critical to growth and survival of wild trout. The placement of our study sites allows us to identify how water quality changes as a result of all major dams, irrigation withdrawal and return-flow points, and natural ecological boundaries along the course of the Henry's Fork. This knowledge will help inform management of the river to optimize not only water quantity but water quality as well.

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High-Tech Bug Sampling . . .

Continued from page 1

and identifying individuals accurately requires specialized equipment and training, and a large amount of time. As a result, laboratories charge several hundred dollars to process a single invertebrate sample. Compare this to the \$10-\$20 cost of analyzing a water sample for sediment or phosphorus. When we first learned that new technology could greatly reduce the cost of processing invertebrate samples, we invited invertebrate experts Brett Marshall and David Richards to bring this technology to HFF.

The new technology uses DNA “bar codes” to identify invertebrates present in a sample. Large databases of these bar codes now exist. If the bar code of each species present in a given stream appears in one of the databases, then invertebrates from that stream can be identified through DNA analysis, which is an automated process that does not require a person to sort through the sample under a dissecting scope. The only catch is that when this technology is applied to a new stream, samples must be analyzed both manually and with the DNA technology to match up the bar codes with the actual invertebrates in the stream.

We took the first step toward this matching process in March, when we collected samples of invertebrates at five locations on the Henry’s Fork: Flatrock Club, Last Chance, Osborne Bridge, Ashton, and St. Anthony. Based on previous work, we know that together, these five sites contain nearly all of the invertebrate species present in the whole watershed. Brett’s laboratory in Bozeman is currently sort-



ing these samples the old-fashioned way and will provide us with a complete species list this summer. After his lab completes the manual analysis, David will send the same samples to the University of Utah to obtain the DNA analysis. By the end of 2015, they will have matched the individual invertebrates with the DNA bar codes so that in the future, we can use the DNA method, instead of the expensive manual method, to process samples and calculate invertebrate metrics.

HFF plans to repeat the March sampling during 2016, 2017, and 2018 and use the DNA method to track changes in invertebrate abundance, species composition, and metrics at these five sites. Beyond this, we can use the DNA-based technology to analyze all invertebrate samples we collect, regardless of when, where, or why we collect them. For example, we might use DNA-based analysis in future studies of trout diet, insect emergence timing, and response of invertebrates to climate change.

As we obtain results from this effort, we will circulate results widely, so that anglers will have a good idea of what insects the trout are likely to be eating in different reaches of the river. After all, what would the Henry’s Fork fishing experience be without the insects?

Wild Trout Club: Lifetime giving of \$10,000+ (update of Annual Report)

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In Memoriam Members We Lost

Edward S. Pinkston, 65, of Asheville, N.C., died December 25, 2014.

John P. Oakes, 79, of Redwood City, Calif., died Feb. 18, 2015.



HFF has begun replacement of its aging vehicle fleet with a new pickup, affectionately known around the office as The Rolling Billboard. The vinyl wrap features original art by long-time HFF supporter A.D. Maddox.

Foundation Purchases Site For River Access

Recreational access to the Henry's Fork is part of what makes it special.

Numerous access sites are available along the river, administered by the Forest Service, Fremont County, and Bureau of Land Management, and open for angling and boating enjoyment.

Maintaining and adding access are part of the HFF Strategic Plan, and HFF is continuously searching for opportunities to work on angling access projects.

2015 started with a bang. An early March phone call from Realtor and HFF member Kathryn Bartlett resulted in HFF purchasing an access site at the Del Rio Bridge east of St. Anthony.

Staff is transferring ownership of the site, north and east of the bridge, to Fremont County and raising additional, necessary funds. Fremont County and IDFG are providing a portion of the project funding.

Please contact HFF if you are interested in donating specifically to this project.

HFF Assists City of Ashton With Wastewater Assessment

When Ashton Mayor Teddy Stronks asked his residents for help back in January, Rob Van Kirk and his wife Sheryl Hill answered the call. Rob is an Ashton resident and senior scientist for the Henry's Fork Foundation. Sheryl is a retired aquatic biologist.

Stronks issued a call in the city's newsletter for residents to contact their legislators regarding what the city considers to be an overly stringent limit for ammonia in its treated wastewater discharge.

The city estimates the cost of additional treatment infrastructure to meet the ammonia standard at \$2 million to \$4 million, which would add to substantial debt the city has already incurred in recent years for upgrades to its wastewater and drinking-water systems. Ashton residents have already seen their sewer and water rates rise several times in the past 15 years, and many simply cannot afford another increase.

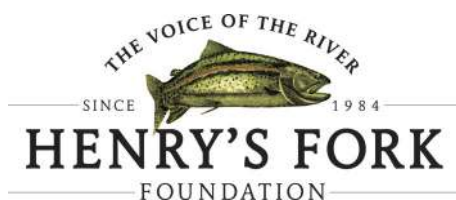
The mayor's plea prompted HFF to get involved, initially because it appeared the city was trying to avoid meeting standards that protect water quality and aquatic life. After initial study, it became clear the city has a legitimate concern. The regulatory de-

tails are exceedingly complex, but the fundamental issue is that the ammonia limit required by the city's current discharge permit is based in large part on the way the receiving water body is classified.

According to the city and based on limited data, the receiving body is a swale that holds waters only intermittently and supports no aquatic life of any type. However, it is classified as a perennial stream that supports cold-water aquatic life and salmonid spawning. It appears the ammonia limits are overly stringent and that meeting them—at an excessive cost—won't benefit aquatic life in the receiving body or in the Henry's Fork.

In its role as a source of scientific information and expertise, HFF has offered to assist the city by conducting a two-year assessment of the physical and biological characteristics of the swale. Of particular relevance is whether the swale meets the regulatory definition of an "intermittent stream."

In March, the Henry's Fork Watershed Council endorsed HFF's plan, which is available online at <http://henrysfork.org/watershed-council>. The assessment will be under way by late spring.



PO Box 550
Ashton, ID 83420
www.henrysfork.org

Henry's Fork Days XXXI

Henry's Fork Days Line-Up

Friday, June 19

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Breakfast on the river (\$10/person)
9:30 p.m. – 12:00 noon HFF member meeting and projects update

Saturday, June 20

4:00 p.m. Host bar, reception, and silent auction begin
5:30 p.m. Rib-eye steak and grilled chicken dinner
(\$50/ticket or \$500/table for 10)
7:00 p.m. HFF awards
Silent auction closes
Live auction with Will Godfrey
Hyde Drift Boat raffle drawing

Upcoming Events

Idaho Gives

Thursday, May 7, 2015

R&R Raffle Drawing

Tuesday, May 26, 2015
Pond's Lodge, Island Park, Idaho

San Francisco Reception

Friday, November 7, 2014
San Francisco, California

Giving Tuesday

Tuesday, December 1, 2015



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