

# THE VOICE OF THE RIVER



Henry's Fork Foundation

WINTER 2015



## 2015 Was a Good Year on the Fork

**By Kevin Darby**  
**TroutHunter Guide**

This year, the Henry's Fork, although hit once again by drought conditions, shined with true resilience. High irrigation demand and a considerable flow increase to test new turbines at the Chester dam made for a tricky approach to the day-to-day fishing on the river.

The early season kicked off strong with great midge and baetis hatches that lasted into May. The highly anticipated salmonfly flight came right on schedule later in May and provided anglers with the first shot at throwing large dries to large eager trout. Cooler weather slowed that hatch, but the golden stones came on strong and continued to show through late July. PMDs, green drakes, and brown drakes

all provided fine opportunities from mid-June through the early weeks of July. The green drakes on the lower stretches of the Henry's Fork proved to be rather exceptional this season.

Oddly enough, the flav hatches of 2015 were lackluster at best and left many anglers scratching their heads as to why. The honey ants came strong through late July, and the robust rainbows of the Harriman Ranch took notice.

August was warm and dry, but there were enough callibaetis to keep the diehard anglers satisfied, and September into the early weeks of October brought solid hatches of both baetis and mahogany mayflies in spite of flows much lower than average for this time of the year. Seasonal

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# Membership: Privilege, Responsibility

Being a member of a nonprofit organization like the Henry's Fork Foundation reminds me of what my dad used to say about voting: "It's a privilege and a responsibility, not to be taken lightly."

Since I started working for the Foundation a few years ago, I have found most of you take us quite seriously. At each fundraising event and every appeal, you answer the call for support of the projects we undertake, mostly without question.

That's not to say you donate blindly. Our members are well informed. We send out a monthly e-newsletter ("The Monthly Hatch"), a quarterly newsletter ("The Voice of the River"), and the annual report. You log on to our website ([www.henrysfork.org](http://www.henrysfork.org)), follow us on Facebook and Twitter, contact us by email and phone, and come to the office to ask about it in person. If you aren't getting all of these communications, we may be missing a current mailing address, an email address, or phone number. If that's the case, call us here at (208) 652-3567. Email us at [hff@henrysfork.org](mailto:hff@henrysfork.org). Or stop by the office in Ashton, Idaho.

Since the beginnings of the Foundation more than 30 years ago, I have been impressed with its work and what it has been able to accomplish on many fronts. In those days, I was a young reporter covering the news of Fremont County. Once in a while, one of my stories shows up in the HFF archives.

Now, sitting at the front desk, watching the staff coming and going, I am again impressed with the work they do, that we do. I talk to members on the phone and greet you when you walk in the door. And I am impressed with the people who make up the Foundation: the members, the volunteers, the employees, and the representatives from government and private entities.

Over and over, I hear the words "cooperation" and "collaboration," and I have come to understand what they really mean. Not just the Webster Dictionary definition, but the effort it takes to live by them, every day, in everything we do.

I am proud to say I work for the Henry's Fork Foundation, proud to be part of an organization dedicated to a great cause. I can say it is a privilege, and I hope I live up to the responsibility of being a member in good standing. I think Dad would be proud, too.

— Cathy Koon  
HFF Staffer





# A Good Year . . .

pattern options were rounded out with a wide selection of smaller terrestrial insects, hoppers, and fairly reliable morning and evening spinner falls.

Fish health was relative to venue, and even though fish count studies showed good numbers in Box Canyon, this favored stretch just didn't shine as it has in years past, with fewer big fish landed and a lot of fish in smaller sizes.

The Ranch, for the most part, showed good numbers of large, healthy fish measuring up to 24 inches. The famed trout of the lower river did not disappoint, and it seems they just keep getting bigger and bigger down there.

After fishing this great river for more than 20 years and working as a guide the past four, I'm always in awe of what the Henry's Fork has to offer.

In addition to being a world-class fishery, the Henry's Fork supports a plethora of local flora and fauna, not to mention a local economy that relies on its recreation and agriculture to survive.



*Guide Kevin Darby and a client caught this wild rainbow trout on the Henry's Fork. Darby reported a good year on the river despite continuing drought. (Photo courtesy of Kevin Darby)*

Its preservation is critical and wouldn't be possible without the Henry's Fork Foundation and members like you and me.



## Investing in HFF Planned Giving [www.henrysfork.planmylegacy.org](http://www.henrysfork.planmylegacy.org)

Driving along the Henry's Fork on my way to go fishing with a group of HFF members, I reflected on all we have accomplished in the last few years.

We continue truly ground-breaking, long-term monitoring of water and habitat quality including specific studies of aquatic insect populations, working with other stakeholders in the watershed to shape healthy, year-round water flows for trout, and wrapping up studies aimed at understanding adult trout habitat use on Harri-man State Park (The Ranch).

And we work with county, state, federal, and private landowner partners to ensure you'll always have access to the river. It's an impressive list, but just a part of all we do for the Henry's Fork and the more than 100 research projects we've conducted.

Yet every step we take is only possible with the support of HFF members.

I invite you to show your commitment and to invest in Henry's Fork with a year-end gift that will let us continue our valuable research, monitoring, and stewardship of the Henry's Fork, and continue to represent the interests of all who care about this magnificent river and the trout and other wildlife that call it their home.

For more than 30 years, the Foundation

has been the voice of the Henry's Fork, its steward, its public educator, its researcher, and its source of scientific expertise. Supporters like you have had our back every step of the way. Thanks again for your commitment to this world-class resource! HFF members have always supported the Foundation's work with their checkbooks, and I ask you to do so this year.

We have many past successes to be proud of, but to continue the valuable research and best represent your interests on this most special of rivers takes energy and money. We have the energy and willingness to get this done; we need your support to do so. It is even more critical that

HFF continue its work in 2016 as the watershed navigates its way through the driest years since the early 1940s.

Please consider investing in HFF as a Life Member or joining the Green Drake Society, if you have yet to do so.

Also, consider going just a little bit further than you have before to help us achieve our goal of being the absolute best at what we do. In the end, the Henry's Fork and everyone who enjoys it will benefit.

– Brandon Hoffner  
Executive Director

SAVE  
THE  
DATE



DECEMBER 1

#GIVINGTUESDAY

# Member Profile: William B. “Bill” Hurst

## 1. When did you first fish the Henry’s Fork? What do you remember most about it?

Early to mid-1980s. It had a multitude of large fish happily feeding on the surface. However, for a fisherman who primarily fished nymphs on Southwest tailwater rivers, such as Lee’s Ferry on the Colorado and the San Juan in New Mexico, the big spring creek was humbling, and as I remember, on that first trip I got skunked. I built my first home on the river in South Pinehaven in the early 1990s, and my love affair with the Henry’s Fork truly began.

## 2. How long have you been a member of HFF? How were you introduced to HFF?

I can remember going to one of the very early Henry’s Fork Foundation banquets and having a great time. So probably gave them some money! Lol. Became more involved in the mid- to late-’90s. In 1997 in a foolish moment, I entered a silent mail-in bid on a Hyde Drift Boat. This was right after I had sold my South Pinehaven house and a few years before I began building the home I now have in North Pinehaven. As fate would have it, I won a nice 16-foot, fully equipped drift boat. Then director Jan Brown was nice enough to store it for me in her garage for three to four months, then the boat went to Scottsdale, where it lived in the garage of my patio home, much to the wonder of my neighbors and other desert dwellers, who passed by for two or three years.

## 3. Briefly, some background. Career choice, family, interests?

Retired attorney, practiced law in Flagstaff and in Northern Arizona for almost 40 years. General practice of law, with heavy emphasis on trial work. Divorced, with a 22-year-old daughter who graduated from Northern Arizona University last spring and will shortly be headed to graduate school in behavioral health.

## 4. Best fishing story?

Fishing in Kiribati (Christmas Island) in the late ’90s with a good friend from Flagstaff, and our guide Moana Kofe, who not only is a fantastic person and a great bonefish guide, but also an amazing cartographer. After fishing from shore and on the flats, Moana decided we were going out farther in his “boat.” The boat turned out to be a rather well used 15-foot Hobie Skiff with dual engines and a manufacturer’s sticker saying maximum load “engines, fuel and passengers 750 lbs.”

When we asked Moana if we weren’t a little overloaded, with twin engines, three grown men, a full tank of gas, and gear, his response was, “Pacific Islanders always overload their boats.” So out we went with less than a half inch of freeboard out of the water on every turn. The fishing was a success with not only bonefish, but also a couple of 40-pound to 50-pound giant trevally. Fortunately, we released all the fish we caught and saved the extra weight on the return trip.

## 5. What do you do when you aren’t fishing?

Woodworking, photography, and reading. Not necessarily in that order.



*Bill and his daughter*



*Conservation and Outreach Coordinator Jamie Laatsch presenting a slideshow.*

## HFF Talks to Students about Science in Their Community

To inspire ideas in this year’s crop of Science Fair participants, North Fremont High teacher Tom Jacobsen invited HFF to present the various science projects we work on in the community and the tools we use to collect, measure, analyze, and report our findings. Conservation and Outreach Coordinator Jamie Laatsch, Research Associate Melissa Muradian, and Research Con-

sultant Christina Morrisett went to the high school and talked to the biology, botany, ecology, and aquaculture classes about our numerous local projects. Highlights from the talk include information about our work in stream restoration, fish passage facilities, and fish population monitoring, as well as a demonstration of the equipment we use to monitor water quality.



# Riffles: Notes from the Field

## Survey Says: Flows Good for Henry's Fork Wild Trout

This summer saw high flow out of Island Park Reservoir earlier in the season than usual, which was necessary to fill the early irrigation demand.

Many of you, like us, were interested in how these high flows impacted downstream water quality. HFF was on the case! We collaborated with Idaho DEQ and Idaho Fish and Game to monitor water quality at three locations in the reservoir and two locations downstream, at each of the reservoir outflow points: the power plant on the east side of the dam and bottom-withdrawal gates on the west side.

A maximum of 960 cfs exits the reservoir through the power plant, and the dam gates are used only when required outflow exceeds the power plant capacity of 960 cfs. Pairing the data we collected with flow data from USGS, we found that additional outflow of at least 200 cfs (out of the gates) resulted in increased levels of downstream dissolved oxygen and decreased water temperature, two improvements in summertime water quality for trout.

We also tested downstream organic carbon concentrations and found that approximately half of the suspended material discharged out of the reservoir was organic in composition, not mineral sediment. For more details on this work,



*Each of the students who participated in this year's Youth on the Fly received a rod and reel, T-shirt, cap, and other goodies donated for the event. (HFF staff photo)*

## Youth on Fly was "Great"

Six professional fly-fishing guides donated their time in August to take eleven Ashton elementary students out on the Henry's Fork for a day of fly-fishing.

Wildfires made the air a bit smoky, but the weather was otherwise clear and warm for a great day of fishing.

Max Palmer, Jordan Lenz, Graycee Litton, Anna Gerber, Slade Orme, Sheylaci Gunnell, Mariya Hoffner, Tayden Reynolds, Ezekiel Jaramillo, Taysen Rigby, and Kira Hurd spent a day floating from Warm River to Ashton Dam, learning

*Continued on page 6*

## HFF Continues Ashton Sewer Plant Assessment

As a service to the city of Ashton, the Henry's Fork Foundation has been assessing hydrological and ecological conditions in the small swale that seasonally receives treated effluent from the city's wastewater plant.

Currently, the swale is classified as a perennial stream that supports cold-water aquatic life, despite relatively little data to confirm that designation. Three recording instruments installed in May have shown that flow in the swale is largely dependent on irrigation of adjacent land from the Farmers Own Canal, which diverts water from Fall River upstream of Ashton.

Aside from a few brief rain events, flow in the swale averaged around 0.8 cfs during the middle of irrigation season and was otherwise barely measurable at less than 0.05 cfs (22 gallons per minute). The assessment also confirmed that water temperatures upstream of the wastewater plant far exceeded values that would support cold-water aquatic life, although we did observe some Utah chubs—a warm-water fish species—stranded in a small pool as the swale dried up after irrigation season ended. HFF will present its findings to the Henry's Fork Watershed Council and the agencies that regulate the City's wastewater plant.



"I learned that conservation is not just keeping the ecosystems the way they are meant to be because there is no "way they are meant to be." Rather, it is finding a balance among the competing needs of industries, ecosystems and anyone else impacted by the conservation efforts."

— Maya Epelbaum  
2015 Summer Intern

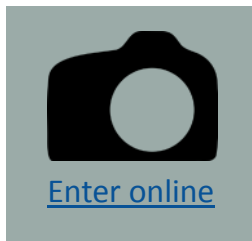
# Fish Out Those Pictures, Enter HFF Photo Contest

The Henry's Fork Foundation is sponsoring a photo contest to reward folks for their best pictures taken in 2015 within the watershed.

We need those good photos to use online and in our many printed publications.

So bring out all those photos you took in 2015 (or still have time to take) and enter the contest in one of three categories: Fish and/or fishing, Scenic, and People. Entry forms can

be found online at <http://henrysfork.org/form/2015-photo-contest-entry-form>



The first-place winner in each category will receive a Sage One rod; second place, a LOOP Evotec reel, and third place, Mike

Lawson's book, "Fly Fishing Guide to the Henry's Fork."

All of the photos we receive will be saved for use in future publications. The contest is open to the general public, not just Foundation members.

## Youth on the Fly . . .

*Continued from page 5*  
about casting, fly-fishing, and the Henry's Fork fishery.

The students were guided by Paul Hoelscher (Henry's Fork Anglers), Logan Martindale (Three Rivers Ranch), Carlos Chavez (Three Rivers Ranch), Rance Dye (TroutHunter), Ryan Loftice (TroutHunter), and Joe Howry (TroutHunter).

We asked students at the end of the day, "How many fish did you catch?" We got answers like "10 fish," "I caught 15," or "Together, we caught 27 fish!" All in all, it was a great day out on the river.

Youth on the Fly aims to connect professional fly-fishing guides with local elementary students to increase youth participation in fly-fishing as a positive form of recreation in the Henry's Fork watershed.

It's our hope these students will grow up with an appreci-

ation of the world-class trout fishery in their backyard, and will be good stewards of this unique ecosystem for years to come.

## Trout in Classroom to Begin Once Again

Trout in the Classroom 2016 is fast approaching, and Ashton Elementary teacher Matt Lyon is helping Jamie Laatsch, HFF conservation and outreach coordinator, prepare for another great year.

HFF and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game first partnered with Matt Lyon and Ashton Elementary in 2012 to bring this nationally recognized program to Ashton. Fifth-grade students will again raise trout from egg to fry while learning about ecosystems, water resources, and conservation.

# Contributions

July 1, 2015 - Sept. 30, 2015

### \$5,000+

Craig Brewerton  
Evelyn H. Fulder Foundation, Inc.  
Gary and Cathy Gross  
Layne and Mary Hepworth  
Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
Jack and Janet Roberts

Future West  
Sallie Griffith  
Dennis Hanrahan  
JP Hayes  
Hank Hemmingway  
Elliot Hulet  
Patsy Ishiyama  
Will and Lillias Johnston  
Chuck & Roberta Katz  
Tom Loeb  
Barry L. MacLean  
Richard Ono and Anne Wagner  
J. David and Leslie Schemel  
Gordon Smith  
Tom and Doris Squeri  
Susan Swig  
Steven Whisler and Val Zupsan

### \$2,500+

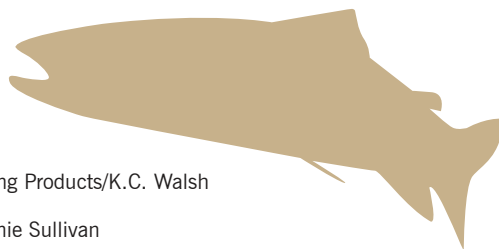
Jonathan and Quinlan Brown  
Thomas and Joan Brown  
Yvon and Melinda Chouinard  
Larry and Pam Garlick  
John and JoAnne Gaynor  
Gary Grigg  
Pamela Johnson  
Neil P. Moss  
Dr. Jim and Bonnie Pohl  
Leonard and Carol Raizin  
Henry Rogers

### \$500+

Takeshi Aiba  
Ken Gangwer  
Hank Hummelt  
William B. Hurst  
LaMoyné Hyde  
Andy Jenkins  
Jimmy's All Season Angler  
Kay Jones  
Lenny and Amy Larchick  
Thomas T. Lawson  
Rev. Peter and Wanda Michaelson  
Jane and John Nelson  
James C. Poulton and Bobbie Armor

### \$1,000+

H. G. Buck and Sharon Adams  
Eric Adema  
Bales Family Partnership  
Garth Blanchard  
Christopher and Nathalie Brand  
Jim Carter and Jane Harrison  
Flat Rock Club



Simms Fishing Products/K.C. Walsh  
Bailey Sory  
John and Junie Sullivan  
Bob Swan  
Tim Thomas  
Liam Thornton  
Peter Valenti  
Tish Wenisch

### \$250+

Tim and Ursula Anderson  
Al and Robyn Arguelles  
Ken and Emily Brakebill  
Randy and Dee Brint  
Beau and Adria Brown  
Roy E. Crawford  
David L. Dieter  
Jim Drake  
Jim Dreyfous  
Brent Esplin  
Willy and Lynne George  
Linda Harris  
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Rich & Barbara Thompson  
Lucas Thornton  
Roger Van Andel  
Tyler Vaghey and Kate Milliken  
Dan Weiskopf  
Paul Wojcik  
David and Susan Work

## In Memoriam Members We Lost

Please send death notices of HFF members to [cathy@henrysfork.org](mailto:cathy@henrysfork.org).

### Gloria Rich Hendricks

Gloria Frances Rich Hendricks passed away Sept. 16, 2015, at her home at the San Francisco Towers. She was born June 22, 1913 in Burley, Idaho.



# Lower Fish Trap Removed at Buffalo River

After seven years of providing useful data on migration of trout past the Buffalo River Dam, the aging downstream fish trap was removed this fall.

The decision was made jointly by HFF, Fall River Rural Electric, U.S. Forest Service, and Idaho Fish and Game, after reviewing data collected since 2009.

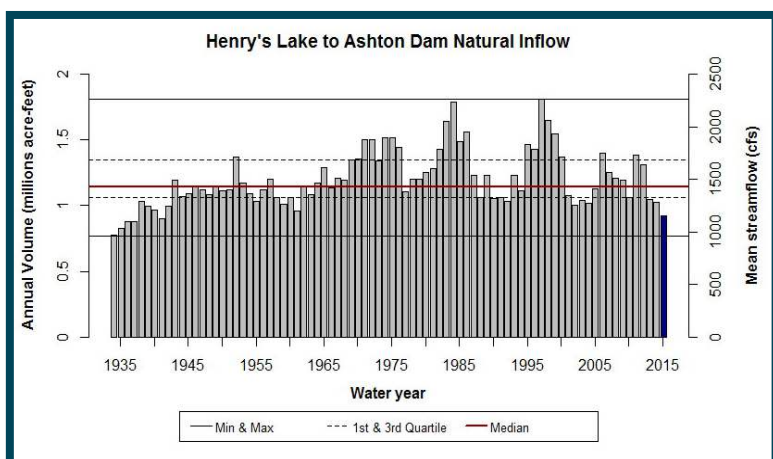
Thousands of young rainbow trout migrate downstream out of the Buffalo River each spring, the vast majority of them spawned in the Buffalo River. However, the outmigrant trap was inefficient at capturing fish, and it had started to fall apart, making it even less useful as a research and monitoring tool.

This spring, we lost weeks of monitoring due to infrastructure failures. Continued cost of trap operation and maintenance was no longer justified by the data we could collect. We now use more efficient methods, such as genetics and PIT-tagging, to study dependence of the Henry's Fork rainbow trout population on the Buffalo River.

We will continue to monitor upstream migration of fish through the fish ladder, particularly during the spring spawning run.



*The downstream fish trap was dismantled (top photo), the pieces hauled away (middle photo), and the area cleaned up (bottom photo). The data collected at the trap will be gathered by more modern means in the future. (HFF staff photos)*



## 2015: Sixth Driest Year on Record

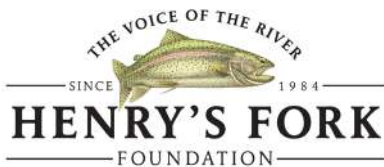
The 2015 water year is now in the books, and it ranked sixth driest in the upper Henry's Fork watershed since record-keeping began in the fall of 1933, and the driest since 1941.

Inflow between Henry's Lake and Ashton totaled 833,784 acre-feet, equivalent to a mean annual streamflow of 1,154 cfs. The driest year on record was 1934, with a natural inflow of 696,280 acre-feet, and the wettest year on record was 1997 at 1,631,000 acre-feet.

Mean annual watershed inflow over the 82-year period is 1,081,000 acre-feet, so 2015 came in at only 77 percent of average. Worse, 2015 was our third dry year in a row, and inflow over the last three years was the driest since the three-year sequence 1940-1942.

Fortunately, excessive drawdown of Island Park Reservoir was prevented by timely rain in May, careful water management, and the collaborative Drought Management Planning process in which HFF participates. As a result, streamflows this winter will be higher than expected following such a dry year.





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Andy Jenkins won first place in the Guide and Outfitters contest sponsored by the Henry's Fork Foundation. His prize was his choice of rod or reel.

## Upcoming Events

### Giving Tuesday

Tuesday, December 1, 2015

### Salt Lake Reception

February 26, 2016

### Boise Reception

April 1, 2016

### Henry's Fork Days

June 16-18, 2016

*Last Chance Sportsman Access, Idaho*

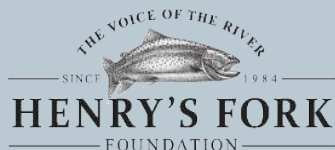
### San Francisco Reception

November 4, 2016

*San Francisco, California*

### HFF Photo Contest

Online entries due January 4, 2016



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