

Celebrating 40 Years!

VOICE OF THE RIVER

Winter Newsletter 2024

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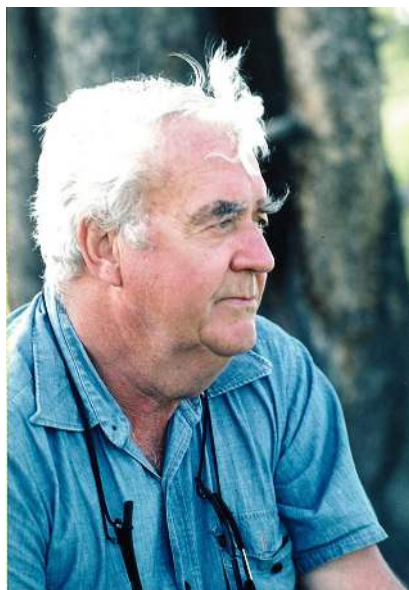
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A Tale of Two Stewards



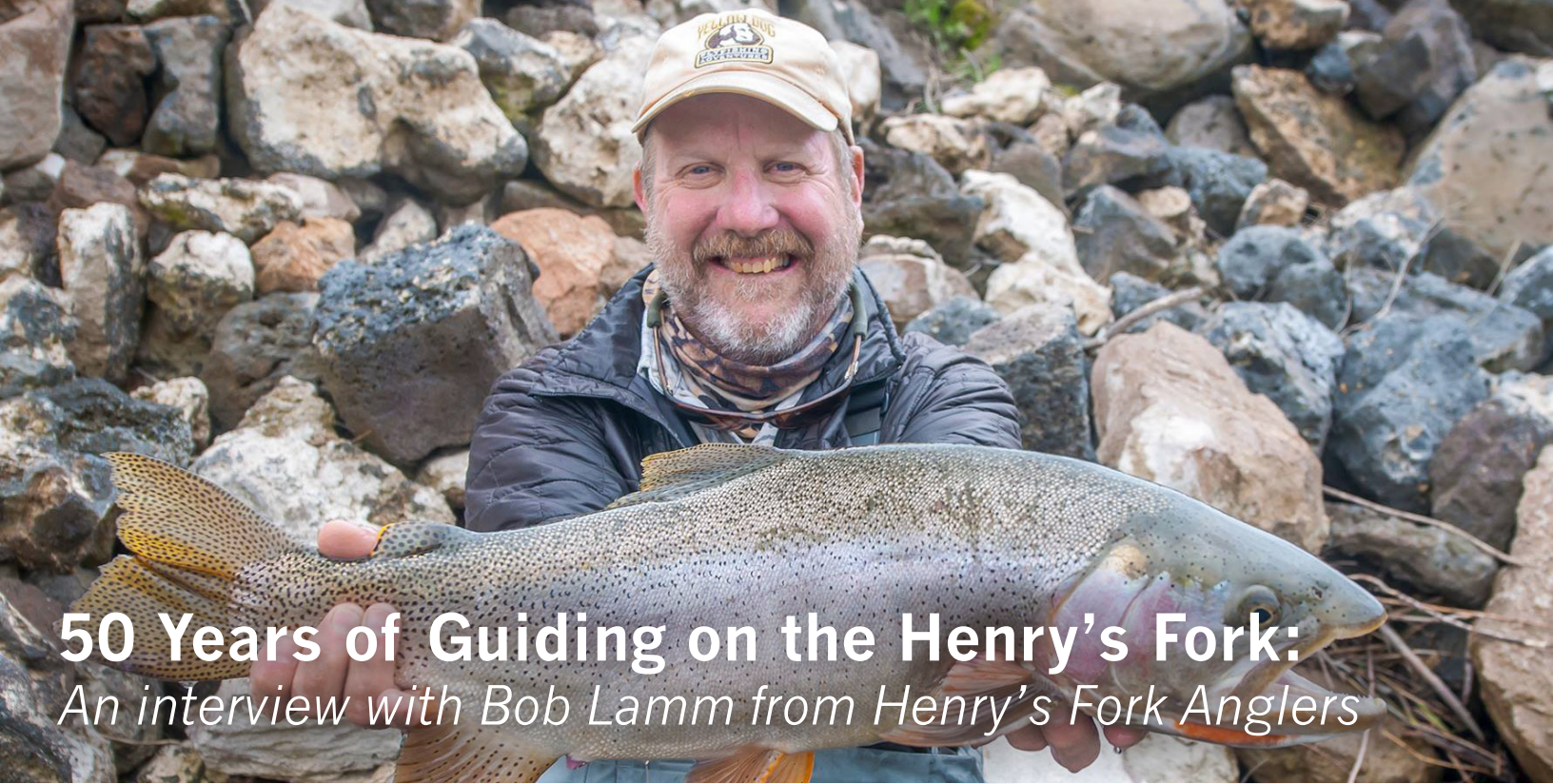
The Henry's Fork has long been considered a mecca for fly anglers. If you wanted to earn that coveted "PhD in fly-fishing," the Ranch is where you had to go. Ernest Schweibert's 1975 article in *Sports Afield* is often credited with sparking the Henry's Fork's fame, but dedicated anglers have kept the lore alive through books, TV episodes, and endless fishing tales over drinks.

During the intervening years, other great fisheries have been "discovered" by the fly-fishing crowd, but there is a group of people for whom the Henry's Fork will never lose its shine. Year after year, they make their pilgrimage or await their chance to retire and move to their piece of fly-fishing paradise. One of the first of these people was Bill Manlove. Described by those who knew him as a man with "bright blue eyes, bushy eyebrows, white-haired mop, resonant self-assured voice with an East Coast accent, and a six-foot two-inch bulky frame [that] made him look and sound like what he was: a polished WWII West Point product." It was Bill's dream to protect the Henry's Fork after watching his hometown waters back East struggle. It's why, around the Lansche's kitchen table in 1983, Bill and a group of friends decided to form a nonprofit to serve as a Voice of the River. And thus, the Henry's Fork Foundation was born.

Those early days were marked by a few major battles and some key victories. Half-a-dozen hydropower proposals would have dewatered the majestic Mesa Falls, had the group not convinced Senator Jim McClure to take a float down the river. These early founders also developed river access and worked with Harriman State Park to fence cattle off the banks of the river, allowing a muddy mess to recover into a healthier riparian ecosystem.

If the West Point graduate Bill Manlove embodied the fighting spirit needed in those early days, Rob Van Kirk embodies what the river most needs now—a die-hard fisherman with a passion for science. Rob drove out to the Henry's Fork for the first time in the late 1970s in a beat-up old truck that broke down halfway there. After sleeping under the stars while an auto shop fixed his rig, he finished the drive to the river that would define his career. Rob worked behind the counter at Mike Lawson's Henry's Fork Anglers from





50 Years of Guiding on the Henry's Fork:

An interview with Bob Lamm from Henry's Fork Anglers

What is a favorite memory from the guide season?

I had a pretty good run in mid-July up on Hebgen Lake, where we went for what we call the gulper fishing. I'm usually not a person to count fish, but we had an exceptional day. I had two gentlemen up there and we guesstimated at the end of the first day that we caught between 50 and 60 fish. And so I had them the next day, and I said, you know, we're not going to beat what we did yesterday, but would you be good for going back? So, we went back the next day, and I did keep track, which I very rarely do when I'm guiding. But that day, we landed 44 fish, lost 17, and had 9 double hookups. In two days, we probably hooked over 100 fish. Just crazy good.

Without sharing any secret spots, are there any reaches of river that fished pretty well this year?

One of my favorite stretches is Ora to Chester. Ashton Dam down to Chester backwaters is typically where I spend a lot of time in June, although it is getting very popular and very crowded. But you know, if I had to choose one section of the Henry's Fork, that would probably be my favorite one for numbers of fish, and size and quality of fish, both Brown and Rainbows.

What do you think about the changes you've seen in the Henry's Fork over the years?

That's a tough one. Definitely more pressure on the river in all the different sections. The Harriman Ranch section does not fish nearly as well as it did in my memory in the 70s. I started guiding in 1974; so 50 years now. I don't

know if you blame that on climate change or water flows, but hatches are less it seems like. I know you hear a lot of reports from the old timers that the Ranch just isn't nearly what it used to be, and I would probably have to confirm that.

What gives you hope for the future?

With the work that you all are doing and the scientific research that Rob's doing, I think the river has the potential to stay pretty stable. We have the catch and release regulations in play, and I think that we certainly ought to be able to maintain the status quo and hopefully improve that if we get some good water years with the water management. It's been unseasonably nice weather through September and all of October, and it has made the dry fly fishing pretty difficult this fall for rising fish, which is what everyone loves to see on Henry Fork. But the Lower Ranch, from Osborne Bridge down to Pinehaven, that section fished fairly well through August and September.

I still feel pretty optimistic about the area, for sure. It's become more discovered. It's still one of the greater places in the Lower 48. Within a two-hour drive of Island Park, you can be on a lot of different pieces of water, with the Henry's Fork being the real gem. The work that your foundation is doing to preserve the river—your water temperature and hatch work—is really nice. I appreciate the daily updates when they fluctuate the water. That's very helpful to the guides to be able to get those updated daily and stuff. So, yeah, that part's good! 🐟

1981–87, while the Foundation was formed, and tied flies commercially, while going to school. With a Bachelors, Masters, and most of a PhD under his belt, Rob was hired on as the Henry’s Fork Foundation’s first Research Director from 1994–98. He took a “break” for 14 years to be a mathematics and statistics professor but couldn’t quite get the Henry’s Fork out of his mind. The Foundation’s current Executive Director, Brandon Hoffner, made it one of his first priorities to rehire Rob as the Science & Technology Program Director in 2013, a position he’s held ever since.

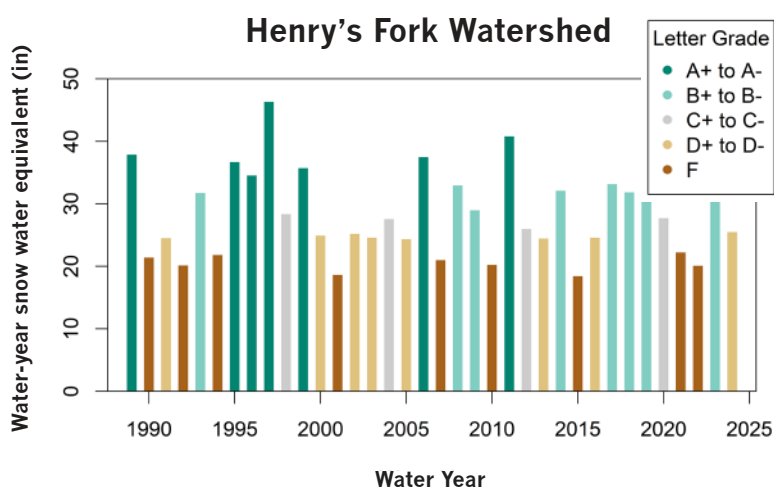
Why is Rob just what the river needs? He has dedicated not only his career, but the better part of his life, to protecting the Henry’s Fork. He can relate to the fisherman who is worried over the changes in hatches, and he knows, as a scientist, what it will take to tackle it. But if you ask Rob about his career, he will be quick to point to—not the unprecedented amount of water conserved, thousands of additional trout in the Henry’s Fork, and not the recognition from his peers across the West—but the team of people around him. As a mentor, Rob has given more of his time and lifelong knowledge to others than you’d think possible. And he’s inspired enough Psychology and

‘Undecided’ majors to pursue conservation careers to fill a university lab.

Rob will also tell you his ability to do what he does is down to the singular leadership of HFF’s Executive Director, Brandon, who gives him the freedom and encouragement to dream up million-dollar projects and then works behind-the-scenes to make sure the people and funding are in place to make them happen. He’ll also tell you it’s because of the team of equally intelligent and passionate people working alongside him every day; soaking up every lesson like a sponge, so they can one day carry on the mantle. And he’ll be right. A river can’t be saved by a single person. Bill Manlove and Rob Van Kirk are two people who represent two phases of a Foundation, but there are thousands of people who have shaped the Henry’s Fork in the Foundation’s 40 years.

From a tough-as-nails war veteran, to a fisherman-turned scientist and all the students he’s inspired, we can all find hope in the next generation falling in love with the Henry’s Fork, putting down roots, and finding their passion in protecting it. 🐟

Water Year 2024 Recap



- 2024 was the 5th warmest on record (1989–2024), just barely cooler than 2016.
- Snowpack (SWE) peaked at 10 percent below average (89.9 percent of average), or in letter grades—a “D+.”
- Natural flow (what Mother Nature puts in the river) was also 10 percent below average.

- Water supply since 2001 has averaged 15 percent less than it did in 1978 through 2000 (22 percent less in Island Park).

What does this mean?

Fish need water and even though there is considerably less water for fish, that doesn’t mean there is no hope. In lieu of Mother Nature giving us bigger snowpacks with cooler springs and summers and more water, HFF has cutting-edge programs like Precision Water Management, the new DIRT Plan, and a soon to be launched [snowmelt study](#), to make a meaningful difference for fishery health and even the fishing experience.

But there will be trade-offs. If we want higher trout populations in years with low water supply, will we have to accept low fall flows and tough fishing to achieve high winter flows for trout survival? Can we adapt? 🐟




\$1 Million For Henry's Fork DIRT Plan

With 40 years behind us, we are looking 40 years ahead. The Henry's Fork Foundation is thrilled to announce we were awarded a \$1 million federal grant from the US Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART program to develop the revolutionary DIRT Plan: Developing Infrastructure to Reduce Temperature and Turbidity.

Water temperatures and changing hatches are at the forefront of anglers' minds, and for good reason. Average water temperatures are increasing and may be the culprit in changing hatches seen across the watershed, and especially on the Ranch.

It's time to look at massive-scale engineering solutions,

as well as grounded, nature-based solutions if we want to reduce the amount of sediment sent into the river from the reservoir, and to reduce water temperatures flowing through Harriman Ranch. The DIRT Plan aims to improve water temperatures and turbidity to build resilience for the river and the fish and insects that call it home. This might include variable-elevation withdrawal gates at Island Park Dam and reservoir improvements such as tributary restoration, sediment stabilization, and deep-water oxygenation.

We are on the leading edge of understanding and addressing the major challenges facing western trout fisheries today. To learn more and support this effort, you can visit henrysfork.org/dirt-plan. 

Voice of the River



Henry's Fork Watershed Council Tour

Participants toured the Last Chance Wastewater Treatment Plant, Island Park Reservoir, and Island Park Dam. A special thank you to everyone who joined us, and to tour leaders from Fremont County, the City of Island Park, Forsgren Associates, Fall River Rural Electric Cooperative, and Fremont-Madison Irrigation District!

Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

Fremont County operates a wastewater treatment facility on Forest Service ground in Last Chance, and they are getting ready for an upgrade. This improvement will help mitigate the risk of further nutrient enrichment in the river and protect the aquatic ecosystems. Learn more [here](#).



Henry's Lake Flats P&Z Hearing

Hundreds of people attended hearings where Fremont County Planning & Zoning eventually denied a change that would allow an "airpark" and new hotel on Henry's Lake Flats.



Volunteering

Thank you to those who volunteered for our last river cleanup of the season on October 17 and to those who helped measure water quality on Island Park Reservoir this fall. Interested in volunteering?
Email jasper@henrysfork.org.



HFF's Fin^{est} Fantastic Outreach

EDUCATION

Students from Madison Junior High visited Big Springs to learn about insects and aquifers with HFF staff.



EVENTS

Did you see us at the Wretched Mess Festival or the Fremont County Fair this year? The next time you see us, come and say hi!

WE VOLUNTEER

HFF staff had a blast volunteering at 'Stripping for a Cure' and 'Haunts of Harriman' events this fall.





Notes from the South Fork

We wrapped up another busy season on the South Fork. New South Fork Initiative (SFI) Coordinator, Devan Ence was on the ground throughout the watershed—if you didn't catch him at an access site during Morning Bites this summer, keep an eye out next year!

Water Quality Monitoring

South Fork data collection had an eventful year as the canyon sonde (in-river water quality monitoring device) got ripped off the bank after flows hit 20,000 cfs in mid-June. With help from the SFI Advisory Committee and Board members, the field crew relocated, redesigned, and rebuilt the housing for the sonde to help it withstand a big rush from high flows in the future. Not to be outdone, the lower South Fork sonde was damaged by curious animals chewing its cables, so staff had to upload the data to the website manually each month. A huge thank you to all who helped troubleshoot these technical difficulties and get those sondes back up and running.

Streamflows

In late July, anglers noticed lower flows than expected. A few factors could have been at play: 1) Springtime aquifer recharge efforts boosted groundwater return which meant that irrigation need could be met with lower reservoir outflows; 2) For the first time since 2020, all reservoirs in the Upper Snake Basin filled both on paper and physically, allowing the reservoirs to be managed to minimize the

amount of water leaving via outflow; and 3) There was a temporary mid-summer lull when hay was being cut and grain was no longer being irrigated around that time.

New Project

Finally, we got word that HFF received a \$400,000 grant that would allow, among other things, for the capacity to expand the daily water quantity and climate data to the South Fork, similar to what is available on the Henry's Fork. Anglers will have access to real-time information every day to help better plan their fishing day (or week!). More on this exciting new effort soon. 🐟





Hooked on Henry

A HFF “A River Runs Through Us” Member Story

We were hooked on our first trip to the Henry’s Fork.

When we got our newest Australian Shepherd, the choice for his registered name was obvious: Henry’s Gone Fishing, with his informal name, “Henry”.

Henry wasn’t exactly a peaceful puppy. While always a happy dog, he was full of erratic energy and experienced frequent seizures. As we learned over those first months, a number of puppies in his litter had serious genetic issues. Looking for a way to help him, we researched and found that cold water can stop a seizure and prevent hyperthermia. That led to us finding a nearby location for dog dock diving.

Dock diving is a competitive sport in which a dog runs down an elevated platform and then leaps after a toy tossed

by its handler before landing in a water-filled swimming pool. Henry took to it quickly, with little encouragement needed, as it gave him an outlet for his boundless energy. And the cold water in which he lands has helped limit his seizures.

Now after two years of competition with North American Diving Dogs, he’s nationally ranked at 8th place in his class and his personal best is 25 feet. The best part for him—and us—is that he’s one of the most popular dogs at the competitions, with everyone calling his name when he’s jumping or passing by.

And if we’re seen without him and someone asks where he is, of course we say, “Henry’s Gone Fishing.”

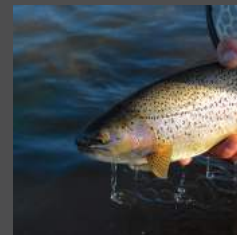
~ Tom and Terri Rossi 



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PLANNED GIVING BRIEF

Ending the Year Well



Get a head start on your year-end tax planning.

✓ **IRA Charitable Rollover**

Congress made permanent the law that allows people age 70½ or older who own an IRA to make gifts directly from their IRA to charity. For many people, this is the best tax-wise way to give. An IRA rollover gift will not be included in your taxable income and may qualify for your required minimum distribution. Contact us to learn more.

✓ **Outright Gift of an Asset**

If you wish to make a gift to support our cause this year but are concerned about preserving your cash resources, consider a gift of an appreciated asset. A gift of securities, business interests or real estate can provide you with significant income and capital gains tax savings, often exceeding the benefits of a cash gift.

✓ **Donor Advised Fund (DAF)**

If you are looking for an end-of-year deduction but want more time to make thoughtful giving decisions, consider a donor advised fund (DAF). Our organization can use your tax deductible gift to establish a DAF in your name. You can make grants from your DAF now and in the future to support our work and other causes you care about.

✓ **Zero-Tax Gift and Sale**

If you are planning to sell an asset like securities, real estate or a business, before you sell, consider a "zero-tax" charitable gift and sale. By making a gift of part of the asset before the sale, you can use a tax-saving charitable deduction to significantly lower or eliminate the capital gains tax on the sale.

This information is not intended as tax, legal or financial advice. Gift results may vary. Consult your personal financial advisor for information specific to your situation.

Consider these worthwhile strategies before the year's end.

Selling securities, real estate or a business this year?

Consider planning strategies to avoid capital gains tax

Age 70½ or older?

Make a gift from your IRA

Own an IRA and/or 401(k)?

Maximize your deductible contributions

Expect to be in a higher tax bracket?

Talk to your tax advisor for solutions to manage taxes

Expect to be in a lower tax bracket or can control income?

Shift income to this year

Have investment losers?

Sell to offset winners and lower your capital gains tax

Extra medical expenses?

Establish a health savings account (HSA)

Have state taxes, property taxes, medical bills?

Accelerate deductible expenses

May We Help?

If you would like further information, please contact us. We can help you create a plan that meets your needs and goals.

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