

April Speaker

Reading the Trout with Maggie Merriman

Our April meeting speaker needs no introduction for any of our long time Club members. She is an icon in the sport of fly fishing and is recognized internationally as a pioneer in the sport, as well as an active spokesperson and strong advocate for introducing and encouraging women into the sport. She has pioneered fly-fishing schools, developed fly fishing gear and been a writer for numerous fishing magazines. She spends her summers running her own fly-fishing school based in West Yellowstone, Montana (not bad duty).

Maggie Merriman will be our April speaker and her presentation will be on **“Reading Trout in Streams”**. Maggie will cover techniques for small streams, how to identify productive waters, where trout live and why, and how to approach and present the fly in challenging situations. This will be an extremely timely subject with spring just around the corner and with all our trout waters starting to come back to life! Everyone that has been to Maggie’s presentations know first hand

REMINDER

Volunteer hosts for the April 1st meeting (report at 6:15 PM):

Don Davis & Lee Anderson

Thank you, Mona Morebello

Rod Building Class

A new rod building class will start April 17, 2002 on Wednesday at 6:30 PM. The class will be held at the San Carlos Recreation Center which is located at 6445 Lake Badin Avenue, corner of Lake Badin Ave and Adlon Lake Dr. Bring your blank and all component parts. There will be a one time fee of \$5.00 per member to cover materials and rental of the facility.

There are two (2) openings in the class. If you are interested or if you have any questions please call Tom Smith –

how artful and soulful they are.

At our last meeting we mentioned that Maggie was also going to teach an entomology (bug) workshop. We had to postpone the workshop due to the short notice and the Easter holiday. The good news is that Maggie will be back to conduct the workshop this fall.

Also, to take advantage of the opportunity to get Maggie to our April meeting before she heads north for the summer, we postponed the “Fly Market” to the July meeting. The July meeting will include our annual **Fly Tying Roundtable** as well as the first annual **Fly Market**. So continue to collect your excess gear and hold off buying that back up rod or reel until then.

Come join us on Monday April 1st for a delightful night with Maggie.

Winter Fly Fishing on the Roaring Fork River

by Warren Lew

In early February, while on a skiing vacation in Aspen, Colorado, I took two days off to fish the Roaring Fork River, which flows right through town. Although it is rumored that one can catch fish right in Aspen, The Complete Fly Fishing Guide for the Roaring Fork Valley (written by Michael D. Shook) suggested that the winter fishing is best in or below the town of Basalt. It is accessible by public bus, so I took the short 40 minute ride from the North of Nell condos in Aspen to check it out.

The bus dropped me off in front of the city library, and I walked a block to the Taylor Creek Fly Shop for the latest fishing information and purchase my fishing permit. “Will” suggested places to fish and helped me to select the right flies. As expected, midge imitations were the best choice.

Where the famous Frying Pan empties in to the Roaring Fork at Basalt, it is reported that the fishing is excellent there. However, during my visit, it was frozen over, so I walked 10 – 15 minutes down along the Gold Medal Water of the Roaring Fork to fish a few promising runs.

On my first day, due to a late start out of the warm condo in Aspen, I didn’t start fishing until 11:00AM. Although the water was very clear, I was unable to see any cruising or feeding fish, so it was

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: APRIL 2002

Like Martha Stewart says, "It's a good thing." What you're reading, that is. The venerable *Finny Facts*. I've often said that we have one of the best newsletters around. There are times when a *Finny Facts* issue outdoes one of the slick monthly flyfishing magazines. We have steady contributions from

Tom Smith who features "The Fly of Month", words of scientific import "From the desk of the Club Biologist", **Bob Wisner**, and frequent Eastern Sierra reports from **Tom Loe** of Sierra Drifters. The Fly Fishing Federation also has some words of wisdom.



JIM TENUTO

But there are a couple of things I miss. Used to be that you could count on at least one of our august number submitting an article, complete with pictures, about a memorable trip. In fact, sometimes we nearly had too much of good thing. Some of **Kim Jones'** pieces were miniature jewels. **Ed Velton** kept us entertained with tales from the Big (or was it Ugly...maybe both) Yellow Boat. **Pat Case** would occasionally push nouns against verbs and relate some of his adventures.

Tales from the Club...that's one of the things that I miss.

What I really miss, though, is "The Member of the Month" column. When I first got involved with San Diego Fly Fishers back in 1992 I answered a plea from **Steve Netti**. He had penned the column for over two years and was looking for a replacement. Steve was quite involved with the Club in those days. He was the doge of the Flytying Congress and a frequent "guide" into Pauma Creek. He also held the conservation chair and served on the board of directors. Steve did confuse centimeters with inches when he described the size of the trout he caught...but then nobody's perfect.

Steve was one busy dude.

So I volunteered to take over the column. My goal was to write more "Member of the Month" columns than Steve did.

Simply, it was one of the best things I ever did. I interviewed some of the legends of our club: **Ansel Watrous**,

Robbie Robinson, Bonnie Woods, Gary Hilbers, Gretchen Yearous and **Steve Netti**. For a new member in the club it helped immerse me into my newfound passion and I got to meet some wonderful people. And, as I fancied myself a bit of a writer, it helped me pick up the pen again and do what writers are supposed to do...which is write.

I'd like to see the Member of the Month resurrected. In the years since it was a regular feature we have added scores of interesting new members who each have a great story to tell. We can also "recycle" some of the old members and "reintroduce" them to the membership at large.

Budding writer? Love people? Think everyone has a story to tell? Do you want to have some fun? Maybe even meet some fishing partners? **V-O-L-U-N-T-E-E-R!**

Help bring back "The Member of the Month."

April Fools. April is the right time of the year to begin getting foolish. Opening Day and all.

The folks up north, though not too far north, have informed me of a

couple of events that might interest some club members.

The Fly Fishers Club of Orange County is once again sponsoring "The 3rd Annual Spring Fly Fishing Educational Seminar" and once again they are featuring **Gary Berger**. This is a two-day seminar at Concordia University in Irvine. **Saturday, April 20 & Sunday, April 21, 2002.** The cost is \$65.00 with lunch included both days.

We will have a limited supply of brochures available in the back of the auditorium at our April meeting. Or you can make a check out to **F.F.C.O.C.** and send it to **John Williams, 19859 E. Calle Cadiz, Walnut, CA 91789-1706.**

Our next bit of news is **The Fishermen's Spot** (14411 Burbank Blvd.) will host its annual day-long free Fly Fishing Festival Sunday, April 7th. In addition to some 30 displays by tackle manufacturers, there will be free drawings for door prizes throughout the day.

For information, phone the Fishermen's Spot at 818 785 7306. ➔

FLY CASTING AT LAKE MURRAY

Great winter fishing is here and the trout season opener is just around the corner. Now would be a good time to learn to flycast or just improve your skills. Join the San Diego Fly Fishers every Sunday morning from 9 AM until noon.



PETA May Rise Again

.....at least it's trying to, but it has never really ceased to exist. They were (are?) a dangerous organization by the name of "People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals"



BOB WISNER

PETA, or PeTA for short. They claim to have half a million members but knowledgeable persons claim a few dozen or less. They profess to be vegetarians and a main part of their credo is to not harm or exploit animals. Domestic fowl and fish (fishermen) are on their hit list. Their main philosophy seems to be that "A rat is a pig is a boy is a dog" and that each has the same rights as the other. PETAites carry this to the extreme by believing that all use (exploitation) of animals by humans should be barred, no

matter how humane or necessary, such as culling by hunting of wild animals that are starving and or diseased through overcrowding of their ranges.

According to PETA philosophy and rules, farmers and dairymen exploit cattle either for food or by taking their milk for profit instead of leaving it for calves. If chickens are being raised for sale and for food they are being exploited. If PETA has its way, it's good-bye to burgers, steaks, roasts, etc. There would be no more eggs for sale, no KFC's or Pollo Locos. Owning and restricting a pet of any kind is the moral equivalent of slavery. You couldn't even ride a horse - you'd be exploiting it. Many other such instances result from their cockeyed

philosophy.

Medical research labs, using animals, are anathema, regardless that past, present, or future benefits to mankind have come from such testing. Such labs have been raided, burned, and animals set free - no matter that they couldn't fend for themselves and face a death in the wild much worse than in the lab, where they were born and raised.

Fishing magazines are being solicited by PETA, as they claim that fishing is cruel and related to hunting. I am entering into dialogue with a couple of their ilk. One, at least has had the courtesy of asking for information and my opinion of pain in fishes - admittedly an open question and subject to personal opinion. BUT, texts and lab reports make no mention of pain cells in fishes - more (much more) on this subject later. 🐟

SDFF Members Assist With Fishing Derby for Kids

Nine members of SDFF, under the capable leadership of Joe Bain, assisted with the STAR/PAL "Fishing Derby" at Chollas Lake, on Saturday, February 23. This terrific event, sponsored by the City of San Diego, was for 8 to 15 year-olds interested in learning how to fish. Each of 500 (!) children received a free T-shirt, spin casting fishing pole, small tackle box and a barbecue lunch...such a deal!

Louie Zim assisted with handing out rods to the kids, and Pat Case and Helen Condit helped man one of five stations set up for five-minute lessons on subjects such as ecology, species of sport fish, and various

types of fishing tackle. Lee Anderson, Floyd Lee, Jerry Cole, and Ken Armer manned a demonstration fly tying table; and Gretchen Yearous worked lakeside as one of the coaches. When the tangles and broken equipment started showing up, everyone pitched in to sort things out.

The vast amount of the workers was representatives of the police and fire departments, assisted by Fish and Game and City staff. Although a daunting task to put on an event like this, it was well organized, and everyone seemed to have fun. And there were even some fish caught! 🐟



Patrick Case and Joe Bain

More photos on pages 4 and 13.





JACK BENTLEY

Any Questions?
Call Jack Bentley at

**The Green River Trip
May 13-18, 2002**

Important Information for those Going on This Trip

For those going on the Green River trip in May here is flight information.

Southwest Airlines

Depart:	Monday May 13th	7:35 am	Flt 970
Return:	Saturday May 18th	4:45 pm	Flt 1589

Arrive at the airport at least 1-1/2 hours before departure time for trip information and tickets to be given out by Jack at 6:00 am.

**San Juan River Trip Slated
for October 13-18, 2002**

The dates selected for this annual trip are **October 13 - 18**, which includes four solid days of fishing on this terrific "Blue Ribbon" river! This tailwater river is particularly good for those just getting into fly fishing because it is very accessible, and offers a wide variety of water, from flats and riffles to holes and runs...not to speak of plenty of big rainbow trout!



Kids Day at Chollas Lake

This is always a fun trip, and it is open to men, women, and couples. There is also a variety of housing available. If you are thrifty, you can get by for about \$650, total cost, not including guides. For beginners and first-timers to this river, we strongly recommend hiring a guide the first day, if not more. A guide will cost about \$175 per person per day.



Pat Case is organizing this trip. E-mail him at [or call during _____](#) the day at . Tell him (1) who you want or don't want to bunk with, (2) what type of accommodation you want, (3) what days (if any) you want a guide, and (4) if you want a wading or float guide. 🍷



Roaring Fork River

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necessary to “blind” cast in each run. There were many times I felt I had the perfect drag free drift... expecting a take at any moment, only to have my fly continue on downstream.

I was excited about fishing the #18 - #20 Yong Specials that I tied in olive, summer brown, and red. However, I didn't get any “takes” on these flies.

Over the four hours I fished, I caught and released three 12” browns, on a #18 black chironomid fished below a #12 Prince Nymph. All of the fish took the small dropper fly, and as my low catch rate suggests, I had to present the fly many times before I could get a fish to take the fly!

The Roaring Fork browns were good fighters, and there were times I wish I had brought something heavier than my Scott four weight rod. When each fish would try to go downstream with the current, I would have to gingerly ease it back up, or chase the fish downstream to recover line and protect my 6X fluorocarbon tippet.

On my second day, which was much colder than the first, I returned to the same runs where I had caught fish a few days before. Feeling more confident, I expected to catch at least double what I had before. But, after two hours, I didn't bring one fish to the net, so I quit early. I should have gone skiing!

I did discover a great place for lunch on that second day. Again, just a block away from the bus stop returning to Aspen, I had a wonderful Thai Chicken wrap and Coke

at The Noodle Bowl, 132 Midland Avenue, Basalt.

The spinach tortilla was filled with generous portions of chicken, sticky rice, fresh thinly cut cucumbers and carrots, accompanied with a peanut sauce. It was delicious, and even though I didn't catch any fish, I had a great meal...and felt much better afterwards!

One might think it was incredibly cold, but during the mid-day, I fished in my neoprenes, with a fleece jacket and windbreaker. I was very comfortable. But, once the sun started down, the temperature dropped rapidly to the low 30's.

Try fishing the Roaring Fork next time you're in Colorado. It's a year around fishery, and if a novice like me can catch fish in the middle of winter, think how you'll do in the summer or fall! 🐟



*The Roaring Fork River, below the town of Basalt.
(Two of my fish were caught near the far bank).*



A typical Roaring Fork Brown trout.



FLY OF THE MONTH

OLIVE MATUKA

Hook:	Tiemco 5263BL - Size 2 - 12
Thread:	Olive 6/0 or 8/0
Rib:	Fine copper wire
Body:	Olive chenille - fine or medium
Gills:	Red wool yarn or red dubbing
Wing:	Two or four dyed hen grizzly saddle hackles or olive chickabou feathers
Hackle:	Olive dyed hen grizzly or chickabou



1. Starting at the 1/5th point behind the eye wrap a layer of thread back to the bend of the hook. Tie in the ribbing at the bend of the hook. Tie in the olive chenille for the body. Take the thread forward to the starting point.
2. Wrap the chenille body forward to the starting point and tie off. At this point tie in the red yarn and wrap it to about two eye lengths behind the eye. Tie it off and remove the excess.
3. Select two or four wing feathers. They should all be the same size so that they will meld together when paired up facing each other with the concave sides in the center. Measure the wing feathers so they extend a full hook length behind the bend.
4. Strip the barbules from the bottom portion of the wing (only the portion which is to be tied on top of the hook shank) So that you can tie on the wing with the stem of the feather resting atop the hook with the top barbules sticking up over the hook shank. (Kind of like a mohawk hair cut) Clip of the excess stem and discard.
5. Tie in the feather wing by the butts just in front of the red gills. Pull the top barbules back creating a "V" section exactly over the top of the tie in point of the ribbing. Take a turn of the ribbing through this "V" section securing the wing to the hook bend. Wrap the ribbing forward in neat turns to the end of the gills. At each point where the ribbing goes over the hook shank, use your bodkin to make a new "V" section through which you pass the ribbing. When you reach the end of the red gills your wing will be securely attached to the top of the hook shank. Tie off the ribbing material and clip off the excess.
6. Select a hackle feather which is twice the length of the hook gap. Prepare the feather and tie in on behind the eye wet fly style. Make three or four turns of hackle and tie it off. Remove the excess, wrap a neat tapered head, and whip finish. Use a drop of head cement on the head.

This fly was recommended by Hugh Marx in his presentation at our February meeting. Matuka patterns originated in New Zealand and have fooled fish all over the world. They are considered a streamer pattern, supposedly imitating a baitfish. (Maybe?) I have on occasion had great luck with this fly tied in a size 12.

Tom Smith



Eastern Sierra Fishing Starting to Heat Up

Opening Day is Just Around the Corner for New Extended Season

Howdy friends and Sierra Drifters. May this almost St. Patrick's Day report find you all healthy, happy and not looking too green after quaffing an Irish brew or two.

We have had a plethora of weather and conditions to report since our last update. Daytime highs have reached the mid 70's with mild a.m. temps in the 40's. An erratic series of dry cold fronts have passed over the Owens Valley in between the mild weather periods leaving several windy, cool days.

I suggest you pack both warm and cold weather gear if you plan on venturing up to the Eastern Sierra in the near future. This time of year can be very contrasting in terms of weather conditions.

How about a little foreshadowing? The ice has come off 90% of the surface of Crowley Lake. This is about 2 weeks prior to last season for those of you wishing to plan ahead. The snow pack is not great but will provide enough water for the Crowley drainage and Rush Creek watersheds as of this report.

Fishing has continued to be very good to excellent in most areas. The warm, dry weather combined with low water flow levels on the Lower Owens River have made this a memorable early spring in terms of great dry fly activity.

We would like to extend a challenge to those SPONSORS and PARTICIPANTS of the Blake Jones catch and fillet event scheduled for this March 16th weekend.

SIERRA DRIFTERS



TOM LOEB

fast food bags are most definitely less heavy than when you pulled up to do some fishing. How about taking the time and effort to pack out some trash and not just fish.

Lower Owens River: Excellent

Fishing remains remarkable in all sections of the river as of this report. The flows have just recently increased to 110 cfs. up from a low of 78 cfs. The water temperatures have climbed into the low 50's due to the mild weather over the last several days and this has triggered the caddis, stoneflies, midges and mayflies into a splendid series of hatches starting around 9 am each day. The wild trout section is fishing as well as I have seen it in several years. I tried to find a well-presented pattern that did not work in sizes #16-20 and failed to do so. When is the last time you heard a report like this regarding this area. Most of the fish will be on the small side, 8-10 inchers, however a fair amount of these critters will double over a 3-4wt. rod as they can reach the 16" mark. Nymphing with light to moderate weighting, dry fly imitations for all the above mentioned aquatic insects will all get the wild browns that inhabit this areas attention if you succeed in a solid dead

drift. Use 6X tippet material on the terminal end for best results. The fish are spooky if you shadow or line them; this is always the case here. Try to keep the sun on your back and keep a low profile when approaching the bank or a riffle.

How about a little something new pertaining to this fish-a-thon? Remove more trash than you leave from these areas please. The used up Styrofoam worm containers, floating psychedelic stink bait jars, beer cans and bottles, cigarette butts, yards of tangled monofilament and

drift. Use 6X tippet material on the terminal end for best results. The fish are spooky if you shadow or line them; this is always the case here. Try to keep the sun on your back and keep a low profile when approaching the bank or a riffle.

The #16-18 black to very dark olive caddis will start the day off along with the midges around 8-9 a.m., followed by a strong but brief baetis hatch #18-20 light olive body/ light dun wings around noon to 2 p.m. Fish the downstream side of a riffle during this period. Go back to the caddis or be on the look out for some #14-16 dark stoneflies. You nymph maniacs should do well all day. I dare say the bite is "epic" and strongly suggest you give this area a whack before the water levels increase or the conditions change due to a major weather change. Crowds have been moderate to heavy as the word is getting out.

The drift boat sections have been kicking out numbers as well as large rainbows and browns recently. The dry fly activity has us drifting both caddis and may fly imitations during the mid-day hours. The overcast days are definitely more productive, with windy and bright sunny conditions slowing the hatches down significantly. We are continuing to have excellent results tugging streamers in olive #8-10. A light to moderate sink tip will suffice under these flow rates.

Talk about a memorable bend! Steve Lankenau from Temecula Ca., and his buddy Carlos Levalle of Corona Ca., took a drift with us recently and Steve spanked back to back 24 inch rainbows on consecutive casts out of the same pool! I was whooped after getting out and netting 2 huge rainbows and taking pictures, giving high fives all around and what does Steve do on his third cast? Hooks another toad that was reluctant to get its photo

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Eastern Sierra Report

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taken...Far out day guys, check out the pics on our website at <http://www.sierradrifters.com/fish.html>

Doug and Jeff Stuart of Thousand Oaks Ca., spent a couple of days this March drifting with us on the Lower "O" and whacked 80 browns and rainbows during some gorgeous weather. Yeah baby! Too much fun, see you this summer on Crowley guys.

Pleasant Valley Reservoir: Good

The bite is on everywhere and this place is

no exception. Tubers will find fish from the launch ramp to the inlet area and should do well on a variety of streamers #6-12. I like olive or badger colored patterns with some crystal flash. Use a full or moderate sinking tip line to get down if the fish are not feeding on the emerging midges in the shadows of the cliffs or after the sun gets lower in the afternoon.

The river section is also fishing well with a dry/bead head nymph dropper combo. A dry/dry works well also if you have troubles seeing the smaller terminal fly. Use midge larva or non-ribbed hares ear patterns for your nymphs # 16-18 in black and gray bodies.

The Gorge: Very Good

Solid bite here on dries and nymphs alike. Great weather and light traffic in the harder to reach sections like the lower and middle gorge make this the best area for fly fishers seeking some solitude this weekend. No snake reports yet, the evil nettle will greet you whether you wish it or not.

Be the fly...Tom Loe
Sierra Drifters Guide Service
E-mail driftfish@qnet.com
<http://www.sierradrifters.com>
Phone 760-935-4250 🐟

Are You Ready?

As we start a new season, it is time to ensure your equipment is ready for another year of fishing. The first area I work on is my fly rods. I wash the fly rods using water and a mild detergent and rinse the rod off in clean warm water. I dry my fly rods thoroughly and lubricate the ferrules with paraffin wax. I simply rub the wax on the ferrules make contact. This waxing prevents premature wear of the ferrules as well as reduces the harmful effects of dirt and sand on the ferrules. The next thing I do to my rod is to clean the cork handle. I use an old toothbrush and toothpaste to scrub it clean.

Next, I cut my lines off my backing, clean the lines by washing them in mild soapy water, and rinse them well before drying. During this process I also stretch my lines to take the curls and twist out. I apply a line dressing to only my floating lines to protect them and to help them float. I re-tie all my lines back onto my backing using a nail knot and coat the knot with a product called knot sense. I find by doing this the knot area of the line will run smoother through the ferrules. Next, I put all new leaders onto my lines and use knot sense on all the knots. This not only help the knot move smoother through the ferrules, but also seals the end of the floating line

so water will not wick up the end causing it to sink.

For my reels, I regularly throughout the season take them apart and clean them thoroughly. After cleaning, I apply a coating of lithium grease to all the moving parts not associated with the drag system. When I finish the day of fishing, I back the drag off completely which will reduce the wear and pressure on the drag system.

For my flies, I go thought my boxes remove all the chewed up ones, remove the materials from these ones, and use the hooks again. Any of my flies that have the hackles mashed down I fix by boiling a pot of water and holding the flies over the steam. This seems to work for almost any of my deformed flies. Ensure the flies are completely dry before placing them back into their cases.

I inspect my vests and remove all the old chocolate bar wrappers, old leaders and tippet materials, and any other garbage I may find. I wash my vest and hang it to dry. When dry, I restock my vest with the items I regularly use. I empty all the pockets in my float tube and remove the tube from the lining. I clean the lining and inspect it for any rips or damage seams. I inspect the tube for any nicks or cuts and repair if necessary. I replace the tube and inflate my tube fully, then restock the assembled tube with the items I normally

carry. I do this same process with my pontoon boat.

For my neoprene waders I wash them with unscented mild soap, using a soft bristle brush to remove mud and debris. Again, I rinse with water, hang my waders and allow them to thoroughly dry. Once the outside is dry, I turn them inside out to ensure complete drying and to help prevent odor buildup.

For my breathable waders I hand wash my waders in warm water with an unscented, mild soap. I rinse them thoroughly and hang them to dry. If I find that drops of water will not bead on the outside, I will spray my waders with a water repellent spray, like 3M Scotch Guard for fabrics. **DO NOT USE A SILICONE BASE SPRAY.**

Last items to clean are my fins, boo-ties, and wading boots. I inspect both to ensure there are no rips and to ensure the felt soles are securely fastened to the bottom of my wading boots. I hand wash both in warm water with an unscented, mild soap. I rinse them thoroughly and hang them to dry.

With all this now done, I am now ready to go fishing at a moment's notice.

(by John Jaillet of the Penticton Flyfishers of BC) 🐟



Efforts Continue to Restore Steelhead to San Mateo Creek

Since my report to the SDFF membership the end of last year, progress continues to be made in the effort to restore steelhead to San Mateo Creek. Although it would be nice to think that this project could move forward quickly, and that significant steelhead runs immedi-



SHERRY BRAINERD

ately would appear, life is never that simple.

The groups that are working for recovery have banded together into the Southern California Steelhead Coalition. San Diego Fly Fishers representatives regularly attend the Coalition meetings. In

addition, our members work with Coalition members to help with many of the individual projects, such as habitat restoration, that eventually will result in a healthy steelhead stream.

Attached below is the Southern California Steelhead Coalition 2000-2001 Progress Report. I think you will find that the Coalition has been working hard, and accomplishing a lot. We owe all of the Coalition members and supporters our thanks for a job well done!



Southern California Steelhead Coalition¹ 2000 - 2001 Progress Report Jim Edmondson, Chairman

Two years ago the Southern California Steelhead Coalition (SCSC) was created as a vehicle to mobilize the interests, energies, and political will of the Southern California community on behalf of these resources. As part of this effort, the SCSC identified steelhead as the key to restoring the full range of fish fauna of Southern California aquatic systems and their watersheds, and identified basic priorities in accomplishing these goals. This report summarizes the achievements of the SCSC as my term in service as Chairman expires.

The SCSC has adopted a set of by-laws and a ten-point strategic action plan² to accomplish its initial goals. On behalf of the SCSC's Management Committee, we are certain the following achievements will bring you both a sense of pride, while empowering the SCSC to accomplish future ambitions.

Action 1. A representative of the Southern California Steelhead Coalition should be immediately granted a position on the California Advisory Committee to the Legislature on Salmon and Steelhead Trout.

In April 2000 Andrew Wetzler and I traveled to Northern California to plead our case before the California Advisory Committee to the Legislature on Salmon and Steelhead Trout (CAC). Three months later, on behalf of the Coalition, I received an appointment to the CAC as an alternate member. This is the first time in two decades a Southern California representative has served on this body.

The most tangible results of this action have been to win support of the SCSC's objectives amongst the CAC members and others

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throughout California, while serving on a newly formed joint federal and state panel to evaluate salmon and steelhead grant proposals for their restoration. This panel, after review, makes recommendations to the California Department of Fish and Game Director for his final approval.

In 2000, over 420 grant proposals were deliberated. Ultimately, the Director approved a number of Southern California restoration projects totaling in excess of \$3 Million. In 2001, the panel reviewed 270 or so proposals and made its recommendations for future Director endorsement.

Action 2. The Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture should include a member familiar with and committed to the needs of Southern California steelhead recovery.

State Senator Dede Alpert (D-San Diego) is a member of the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture. In 2000 and 2001 meetings with Senator Alpert and her staff occurred and we received both a warm welcome and acknowledgement of Southern California steelhead needs. In addition, Committee consultant Mary Morgan has been very helpful in providing the Committee consistent advocacy for the SCSC's aspirations with all members and related interested parties.

Action 3. The Secretary of Resources should act immediately to include Southern California in the agency's new major effort to create a coastal anadromous restoration program.

Secretary Mary Nichols and her staff attended the May 2000 SCSC Coalition meeting and announced that Southern California steelhead recovery had become a part of her agency's Coastal Salmon Recovery Initiative. Since then Secretary Nichols has time and again demonstrated her willingness and actions on behalf of the Coalition's objectives. A prime example was her leadership to include a Southern California representative with a 2000 Memorandum of Understanding between California and the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding protocols governing future recovery grants and funding.

Action 4. The DFG should initiate a budget change proposal to hire two biologists in Southern California who will be dedicated to the recovery of the region's steelhead.

The Department of Fish and Game has taken action to include in its budget funding for three positions dedicated to Southern California steelhead planning and recovery. At the January 2002 Coalition meeting, the first of these DFG employees, Mary Larsen was introduced.

Action 5. The National Marine Fisheries Service and the California Department of Fish and Game should jointly produce a prioritized and coordinated Southern California steelhead recovery program. Both agencies should be committed to fund the recommendations of this program. In addition, NMFS should involve their Southwest Science Center scientific staff in working cooperatively with the DFG on monitoring, research, and recovery planning.

DFG Regional Manager Chuck Raysbrook (May 2001) and NMFS Regional Administrator Rebecca Lent (October 2001) attended SCSC meetings. At these events these leaders were briefed on this item and shared their respective intentions. In addition, the NMFS has hired a Southern California Steelhead Recovery Planner, Mark Capelli, who has attended several SCSC meetings over the past two years. To date, this issue should be considered launched, but much more effort is needed in the future.

To support awareness and need towards recovery, a comprehensive steelhead recovery planning policy paper has been developed and circulated to the SCSC. The paper provides new opportunities and potential remedies to assure the achievement of accountable future recovery planning consistent with the Coalition's mission.³

Action 6. Efforts to increase steelhead passage above existing dams need urgent attention. Both Matilija and Rindge dams should be acknowledged for what they are — public nuisances — and dismantled.



Albeit moving at glacial speed, progress on this critical effort is moving forward on a number of fronts.

- MATILIJA DAM (Ventura River) - The Matilija Coalition has been formed and is a SCSC member who has made several presentations by leader Paul Jenkins at our meetings. The Army Corps is now undertaking a thorough evaluation of dam removal options and implications. In addition, specific efforts to spotlight this project have been conducted including the Ventura River being named as one of America's "Ten Most Endangered Rivers" in 2000 with extensive media coverage. The Matilija Coalition's objectives have been a frequent matter carried forward by the SCSC while implementing its action plan across California.
- ROBLES DIVERSION (Ventura River) – In order for steelhead to gain access to Matilija Dam, they must first overcome the Robles diversion. While a CalTrout lawsuit contending this dam blocks upstream and downstream steelhead passage has been temporarily suspended, progress through collaborative negotiations has occurred. The dam operator (Casitas Municipal Water District) gave a tour of the facility to the SCSC at the SCSC July 2001 meeting and shared their willingness and actions to solve this problem. To date state-of-the-art fish passage facilities have been designed, over \$4.5 Million was raised to fund the project, and progress to begin construction in late 2002 is approaching critical mass.
- HARVEY DAM (Santa Clara River) – Little known, Harvey Dam (a twenty five foot barrier constructed to supply water from Santa Paula Creek — prime tributary to the Santa Clara River — for the City of Santa Paula) blocked steelhead passage to miles of prime spawning and rearing habitat. In 2001 construction of a fish ladder and other improvements were completed with costs in the \$1 Million range. This project provides a tangible example of how and why dam removals or retrofits can be achieved.
- RINDGE DAM (Malibu Creek) – Heal the Bay, CalTrout, State Parks (the dam owner), as well as other state and local officials including Secretary Nichols and DFG Regional Manager, met in January 2001 to discuss how to move this project forward. The Army Corps is proceeding with a dam removal evaluation similar to that underway at Matilija Dam.

Action 7. The National Marine Fisheries Service must shift its efforts from reactionary to proactive. The agency should simultaneously reconsider its initial critical habitat decision neglecting historic spawning and rearing habitat above dams and barriers throughout Southern California and it should take immediate action to expand the boundaries of Southern California steelhead to include San Mateo Creek and other southerly coastal waters.

- see below -

Action 8. The National Marine Fisheries Service should take appropriate action to provide ESA protection for all native rainbow trout in anadromous waters.

Following a December 19, 2000 petition to list steelhead south of Malibu Creek, the NMFS published a proposed decision to expand listing south of Malibu Creek, the southern most listed range of the southern steelhead ESU. (65 Federal Register 79328). This would include, at a minimum both Topanga Creek (Los Angeles Co.) and San Mateo Creek (San Diego Co.), where through SCSC member action, steelhead have been documented since the 1997 federal listing final rule.

In regards to the both the designation of critical habitat above dams, and protection of native Rainbow trout populations located in the headwaters of Southern California coastal river systems that may play an important role in future recovery, several SCSC member groups have filed a lawsuit. The suit is proceeding.

Action 9. The Southern California Steelhead Coalition should continue to emerge as a regional body advocating recovery.

- see below -

Action 10. Public awareness and education should become an important function of the Southern California Steelhead Coalition.



Every effort should be made to initiate a speaker's bureau, Web page and other means of disseminating information to the public, government, and media.

Since its inception and as reported above, the Southern California Steelhead Coalition has become the center for public awareness concerning Southern California steelhead. There are discernable examples of this growth in size and influence.

- Representatives from the American Fisheries Society, UC Davis, and California State University Fullerton have attended and expressed interest in aiding the Coalition's objectives. The importance of including local steelhead within comprehensive watershed and wetlands restoration overarching goals has been embraced by such organizations as the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Watershed Council, and the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project.
- Numerous speaking engagements have been provided at conferences, meetings, and to whomever would gather to listen, concerning the SCSC and local steelhead. Featured articles in the Los Angeles Times, and other local newspapers have occurred, and our message was also carried forward in National Public Radio broadcasts.
- Working in cooperation with the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project and the California Coastal Coalition, we co-sponsored a reception and meeting in Sacramento (March 2001) with elected officials and senior resource managers as a means to forward our joint and respective organization goals.
- A web page has been created and it daily receives countless inquiries with prompt responses.

I would be remiss to close this status report without expressing sincere appreciation to Patagonia, the Sage Foundation, the Brainerd Foundation, the Tides Foundation, CalTrout and Trout Unlimited for their financial contributions to support what is reported here. Finally, it must be understood that the congratulations these achievements may be worthy of, are not to any one individual or organization, but to the collective and cumulative actions of the SCSC Coalition, government leaders, and your Management Committee.

Well done.



Jim Edmondson
Chairman, Southern California Steelhead Recovery Coalition

¹ Coalition members: American Fisheries Society (California- Nevada Chapter), American Whitewater Association, California Trout, Center for Biological Diversity, Clean Up Rincon Effluent, Conception Coast Project, Conejo Valley Flyfishers, Ecology Center of Southern California, Endangered Habitats League, Environmental Defense Center, Federation of Fly Fishers, Fly Fishing Club of Orange County, Friends of the Los Angeles River, Friends of the River, Friends of the Santa Clara River, Friends of the Ventura River, Heal the Bay, Keep the Sespe Wild Committee, Santa Monica Mountains Resource Conservation District, National Audubon Society (Buena Vista Chapter), National Audubon Society (Palomar Chapter), Natural Resources Defense Council, Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Association, San Diego Trout, Santa Barbara SEA, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Santa Monica Mountains RCD, Sierra Club (Angeles Chapter), Sierra Club (San Diego Chapter), Sierra Pacific Fly Fishers, Surfrider Foundation, Surfrider Foundation (Ventura Chapter), The Audubon Center, Trout Unlimited, and Wilderness Fly Fishers

² Finney, K, and Edmondson, J., "Swimming Upstream: Restoring the Rivers and Streams of Coastal Southern California for Southern Steelhead and other Fishes," 2000. www.socalsteelhead.org

³ Edmondson, J. 2001. Salmon and Steelhead Recovery Planning: The Essential Need for Accelerated Recovery Planning Efforts with Measurable Population Objectives. Policy paper for California Trout, Inc. adopted 1/19/2002, San Francisco, CA.





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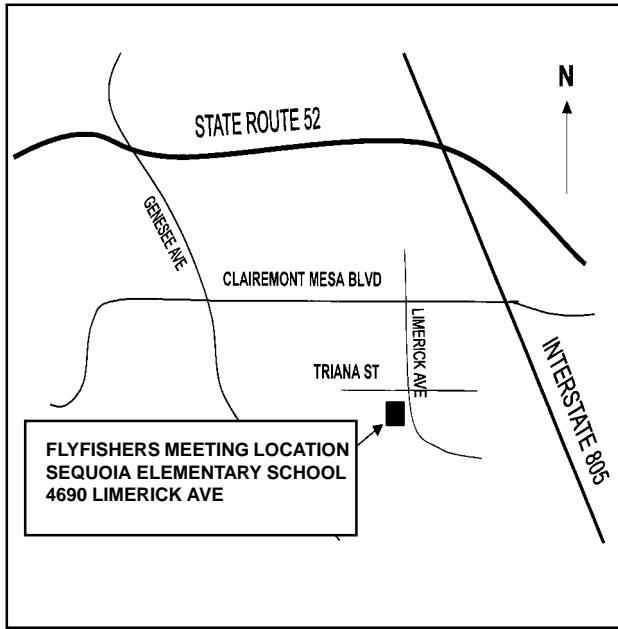
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