



President's Message

When I joined our fly club, I was in my early thirties. Now I get a senior discount on my fishing license. Our club has changed over the years, in part because being a club and maintaining a club has become more complex during a time when society doesn't embrace clubs as much as in the past.

The Board is currently in the process of updating both our Policies and Procedures and our By-Laws. Updating our By-Laws will take care of us on the legal side of things and updating our Policies and Procedures will help us operate efficiently with an ever revolving Board. We are currently discussing changing membership requirements, returning past members, whether our auction proceeds should be split somehow between conservation and education and a few other matters. You can send me or any Board member any feedback you want to provide on these or any current policies.

I would also like to share that over the past several years the Board has had discussions in various forms about attracting both younger members and women members. We know that joining clubs like ours isn't for everyone and that we compete with similar local organizations for everyone's time and interest. We think our educational efforts in casting, fly tying, and introductory fly fishing are helping with recruitment. And for me, our outings will always be a major attraction.

Finally, we are still tentatively talking about holding an auction next spring. If you are interested in helping with auction planning, please let me know. The more members that help, the easier it is for everyone. Thanks everyone. **-Mike**



4CFF Calendar of Events

May 20-27 Outing: Roche Lake / Tunkwa Lake

All club members and their registered guest are welcome. Host - Bob Jorgenson.

May 28 Monthly Meeting 5:30 PM-9:00 PM: Rick Hafele: Deshutes River Alliance, Impact to Fishery

Holiday Inn and Suites by the Airport 4260 Mitchell Way.

May 30: Outing: Conservation Work Party 9:00 AM Repairing Riparian Area

All club members and their registered guests are welcome. Host Ralph Lloyd
Meet at NSEA 3057 East Bakerview at 9:00AM

June 2- Board Meeting 6:30 PM

Trinity Lutheran Church 119 Texas St. All club members welcome.

June 5-8 Outing: Island Lake BC (Big OK Lake)

All club members and their registered guests are welcome. Host Angus MacArthur.

June 25-28 Outing: The Classic River Bend Campground Twisp (reservations required) No June Monthly Meeting

All club members and their registered guests are welcome. Host: Angus MacArthur.

July 21-22 Outing: Upper Skagit River BC

All club members and their registered guests are welcome. Host: Bob Jorgenson.

July 23 Monthly Meeting 5:30 PM-9:00 PM: Steve Hiller & Bruce Aigner, Fishing Patagonia (spring creek trout and Golden Dorado)

Holiday Inn and Suites by the Airport 4260 Mitchell Way.

Summer Casting Clinics

May 16, 23 & June 6, 13

Come join Frank and Steve for casting clinics on **May 16, 23 & June 6, 13.**

The class will focus on accuracy (both on and off side) and change of direction casting with an accuracy focus.

We support the Fly Fishers International's Fly Casting Skills Development Program and the last part of the session will be available to assist those of you who are working through it, with an emphasis on the distance and accuracy casts involved.



Improving your casting skills can greatly enhance your fishing experience, boost your confidence, and prepare you for more advanced casting techniques. We tailor our lessons to meet your individual goals, regardless of your current skill level.

Anglers from the community are welcome to join us by reaching out to one of our expert casting instructors listed below. Expand your casting toolbox to catch more fish. The second hour will be working to improve your casting on an individual basis.

This instruction is to help you catch more fish, and if you are interested we can work with you on the Fly Casting Skills Development (FCSD) level skills. FCSD helps you to develop skills for fly presentation.

We will be presenting some casts to use on the river or stream to allow you to present your fly to a fish more effectively. This will be during the first hour.

The second hour will be working to improve your casting on an individual basis.

Improving your casting skills can greatly enhance your fishing experience, boost your confidence, and prepare you for more advanced casting techniques. We tailor our lessons to meet your individual goals, regardless of your current skill level.

Casting Clinics (cont.)

These sessions focus specifically on your casting aspirations and skill development. Let us know your goals, and we will assist you in achieving them—whether it's narrowing your loops, eliminating a piled leader-line presentation, or tailing loops, or improving your accuracy. The choice is yours!

Please arrive early to set up your 5-6 weight rod with a ***floating line***, With a ***7.5-foot 0X tapered leader***, so that you are ready to start promptly at 10:00 AM. Fly yarn will be provided. Eye Protection is required.

Anglers from the community are welcome to join us by signing up for the courses using the link below or by reaching out to one of our expert casting instructors listed below.

Here's what you need to know:

- Each session is strictly limited to just 8 participants, ensuring personalized attention for everyone.
- Enjoy free sessions if you are a 4CFF member or candidate!
- Non-members can participate for only \$20 per session—an incredible value for a unique experience!
- If the class is full, add your name to the wait-list and we will contact you for further classes.
- Sign up using this link: [2026 Summer Casting Clinics](#)
- For more information about our vibrant club, visit the 4th Corner Fly Fishers website at <https://4thcornerfly.com>

Instructors Contact

- Frank Koterba: fwkiii17@gmail.com
- Steve Hiller: steve.hiller25@gmail.com



March 22 Meeting Report

Leaf Seaburg "Fishing the Greater Winthrop Area"

By John Sanders

Our April 2026 meeting took place on Wednesday due to a conflict with the Holiday Inn venue. Fortunately, that is the last conflict on the calendar, and we'll be able to meet on the fourth Thursday of each month going forward. Fish and Chips was served as we continued to try a different meal at each of our meetings. In the next few months we'll ask you to provide feedback on your favorite meals so far!

The meeting was well attended by 35 people, mostly in person, but a few joined by Zoom during the presentation. Our speaker this month was Leaf Seaburg. He spoke on fishing the greater Winthrop area lakes and rivers over the entire calendar year. Leaf is a guide in the area (Methow Fishing Adventures) and has worked as a fisheries biologist, hatchery manager, and private lake manager. His unique combination of experience, along with his long term residence in the Winthrop area, fueled his presentation with more information than could be absorbed in one setting. As with all our recorded presentations, this one will be posted in the members area of our website for members to review at their convenience.

The Methow Classic outing this year will be held about one month earlier than in years past. This will work well as this year is likely to be a low water year with runoff ending sooner than typical. Hint - Leaf mentioned that at the time of our meeting he had one guide date still available during this year's Classic on Sunday June 28.

You can follow Leaf's activities and contact him on his website at www.flyfishersproshop.com.



Thursday May 28, 2026 Meeting

Rick Hafele: Deschutes River Alliance & Impact to Fishery

Rick has a Master's degree in aquatic entomology and a minor in fisheries biology. He has worked as a professional aquatic biologist for 40 years, specializing in using aquatic communities as water quality indicators. While working for the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Rick was instrumental in developing the States bio-assessment program and writing Oregon's water quality standards for aquatic life. He is also author or co-author of seven books and eight instruction DVDs on fly fishing for trout. Rick is a noted aquatic entomologist in the Pacific Northwest and a recognized expert throughout the western United States.



From the Deschutes River Alliance:

"The lower Deschutes River is the beating heart of Maupin, OR and many other rural communities. It sustains economies by providing recreational tourism. Fish, wildlife, aquatic insects, and humans rely on the cold, clean water of the Deschutes. The Deschutes River Alliance is committed to preserving the integrity of the lower Deschutes River by enforcing state water quality standards. In 2014, a group of seasoned advocates and experts who love the lower Deschutes River gathered to discuss negative changes they were seeing on the river. They shared their observations: the decline in insects and the increase of nuisance algae, the increase in temperature and the change in the color of the water, and how it all coincided in early 2010 with changes in the way Portland General Electric manages water at its Deschutes' dams. Together, they began to organize and execute a plan to return the Deschutes to its best possible condition. With that goal always in mind, we continue to use science as the core of our advocacy for a cooler, cleaner river".

Chopaka Lake / Big Twin Outing Report

April 25-29 *by Bob Jorgenson (co-host)*

The Chopaka Lake and Big Twin outing was a great success by every measure. A total of 15 anglers attended over the course of the trip, arriving and departing at different times.

Weather at Chopaka this time of year can vary dramatically, from mild and pleasant to cold, windy, and unforgiving. Fortunately, this year brought mostly clear skies, interrupted by only a couple of the lake's typical wind events. The changing conditions created opportunities to experiment with a variety of fishing techniques throughout the trip.

Anglers found success trolling and stripping flies, fishing subsurface nymphs, presenting dry flies, and targeting fish with Chironomids. The most productive method often depended on the day's conditions, but every approach produced fish at one time or another. Everyone caught fish daily, while the usual suspects managed to land more than their fair share. The absence of fishing photos speaks to the quality of fishing. We were busy!

Evenings were especially memorable. Calm weather and fires around Lin's fire pit provided the perfect setting for lively discussions, ideas for future outings, and stories from past Chopaka adventures.

Big Twin was added to the itinerary for anglers who preferred to avoid the rugged road into Chopaka, while also serving as a convenient stop on the return trip through the North Cascades. With the mountain pass still closed and the drive home from Big Twin exceeding five hours, attendance there was understandably smaller.

Three anglers spent several days fishing Big Twin, and the results were excellent. Improvements to the lake's bubbler system appear to have created better winter conditions for the fish, and several trout in the 18 to 20 inch range were landed. Although it was still a bit early for prime Chironomid fishing, anglers found success using leeches under indicators, trolling black leeches on Type 6 lines, and in Dean's case, casting a variety of Booby flies.

Dean also hosted an enjoyable evening campfire, adding to the camaraderie of the trip. Big Twin is fishing exceptionally well, and once the pass reopens, another trip there will certainly be on my agenda.



Spring Stillwater Outing

Roche Lake May 20-24, Tunkwa Lake May 24-27

By Bob Jorgenson (host)

Roche Lake Park has seven world-class stocked rainbow trout lakes. Two of these lakes are served by maintained gravel roads on the Thompson Plateau. The park includes rustic campsites that are located on Horseshoe Lake and Roche Lake.

We plan to camp at Roche Lake West Campground because of its proximity to the best fishing. The other lakes are easily accessible from the camp. A pontoon boat, float tube or pram are appropriate. The camping is first come and the fee is \$19CDN. There is no discount for non-BC seniors and they take US\$ at par, so it is best to bring CDN cash. We can double up if there is not room, just offer to pay half the site fee. The lake appears to be fishing well. Try black and green baby Damsels, micro leeches (especially with red/orange heads), along with bloodworms in the early morning, black and red Chironomids (size 16/18), and Chromies with a black rib.



On Sunday the 24th those interested can drive the short distance to Tunkwa Lake. Tunkwa is a club favorite and the Tunkwa Lake Resort offers camping and cabins by reservation if you need showers or want to rent a boat. I fished Tunkwa last week and black or green balanced leeches were working along with the Whiskey Dick Chironomids in 16/18, ASB with a black bead, and black bead Chromies with a red wire. Productive fishing areas are right in front of the resort. The resort rents boats but quality fishing can be reached by pontoon boat.

A better place to stay for pontoon boats is the provincial park down the road. It has bigger sites and better fishing out front. First come first served, but 255 sites give plenty of space. Nearby Leighton Lake is another alternative destination. Angus will be at the Provincial Park and I will be at the Resort. We will gather at the Provincial Park one evening.

There is no cell service at either site but I have Starlink for emergency use.

Educational Activities in 4th Corner Fly Fishers

by Mark D. Munn

It has been about a year since I took lead on education for the club and thought this was a good time to update all of you on what we are doing. Last fall we had a successful *Introduction to Fly Fishing* class at the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association facility. We had 14 students from the community, many of whom had limited experience. The class consisted of presentations on fish species, aquatic insects and other invertebrates, and flies that mimic fish food (Mark Munn), water safety (John Boblett), equipment and rod set up (Scott Willison of the Confluence Fly Shop), and casting (Marion Hiller, Steve Hiller, and Frank Koterba). We plan to offer another *Introduction to Fly Fishing* class this coming fall.



Mark Straightens up after landing a big one in the shallows at Chopaka Lake

Angus MacArthur and I established monthly (October to March) instructional fly tying sessions at the Holiday Inn. Sessions were always at full

capacity. Club members presented a favorite fly or two to the group and everyone enjoyed the food and drink during a short break. Our club has some very accomplished fly tyers and we appreciated them taking time to instruct others. One of the highlights for me was having Ed Ruckey demonstrate his tying skills. While this activity was a great way to improve one's fly tying, it also provided an opportunity to catch up with friends and get better acquainted with newer members. We also held a couple of social fly tying events at individual's houses, which were also well attended. Angus and I plan to continue with these activities this fall.

I want to also say that fly fishing education is not limited to formal "class" activities. For example, while we do not offer a class on fly fishing strategy, the outings are the best way to learn about fishing different waters. Our club has some very good fly fishers that are always willing to share their knowledge. For example, I have never been very good at lake fishing, and I find the lake outings incredibly useful for learning about flies, lines, and strategies for catching fish in lakes. I now catch more fish than I used to (no comments from the Chopaka Lake gang please).

Going forward I hope to add some additional educational activities. I would be interested in hearing from club members as to what type of education they would most like to see added to our club. Also, if any of you are interested in helping or leading an educational activity, please let me know.

Treasurer's Report *by Chris Thomas*

I've been a club member since the early 2000s, and I'm grateful to longtime members like Ed, Errol, and Rick for helping my kids and me discover so many great fly-fishing opportunities. I especially enjoy fishing backcountry lakes and streams, as well as rivers throughout the Pacific Northwest, though I'm always open to trying somewhere new.

Financial Overview

I'm pleased to serve as your club treasurer for 2026–2027, and I'm happy to report that the club is in a strong financial position. As a Washington State nonprofit corporation, 4th Corner Fly Fishers files an annual report with the Washington Secretary of State, as well as a federal income tax return. Our fiscal year follows the calendar year, so committee chairs prepare budget requests in early January, and the board aims to approve the annual budget at its January or February meeting.

Funding Sources

The club has two main sources of funding:

- Member dues, which are intended to cover most of the club's operating expenses.
- The conservation auction is held every two to three years, with funds used primarily for conservation and education.

Auction funds may support projects carried out in partnership with organizations such as the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association, Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group, conservation-focused speakers at club meetings, or direct donations to these and other conservation organizations.

Operating Expenses

The largest share of the club's annual operating expenses is approximately \$3,500 for monthly programs, including speaker fees, raffle items, and A/V equipment. This is followed by about \$2,300 in overhead costs, such as liability insurance, software licenses, and post office box or facility rental fees. Other committees, including Outings and Education, also have operating expenses, but those costs are generally smaller.

Outlook

As many of you know, inflation has increased the club's operating expenses by more than 30% since 2018, while dues have remained unchanged. To continue providing high-quality programs, educational opportunities, and outings for our members, the board will be considering dues increase beginning in 2027.

I look forward to seeing everyone at meetings and outings this year. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask me at a meeting/outing or send me an email.



Planning for Stillwater: Stillwater Chironomid Leader

By Steve Wimer

A standard stillwater leader for chironomid fishing is quite different than the tapered leaders that many people are used to. While the function of the leader is still the same, the goal is to present your fly at the proper depth that the fish are feeding, which may be anywhere from a few feet deep to 20 ft deep or more. Below is a description of the leader most commonly used when fishing one or two Chironomids under a strike indicator. I'll also cover the leader variations that may be used when fishing Chironomids "naked," meaning without a strike indicator.



Steve Enjoys Some Quiet Time on Omak Lake

Most flylines have a welded loop at the end. Attach an 8-12 inch butt section of 15lb monofilament using a perfection loop. Tie a 3mm tippet ring using an improved clinch knot to the end of the butt section. Some dedicated stillwater flylines now come with a tippet ring built into the end of the flyline, therefore the above butt section can be omitted. To the tippet ring attach 16 feet of 8lb Seaguar fluorocarbon. This is the primary section of the stillwater leader. A releasable strike indicator is placed on the primary section of the leader. The length of the primary section can be varied depending on the depth of water you are fishing. At the end of the 8lb Seaguar attach a small barrel swivel. From the barrel swivel, attach a 4ft tippet of 6lb Seaguar fluorocarbon. The bottom Chironomid is attached using a loop knot to the end of the tippet. This allows the angler to fish a Chironomid 20ft deep using a floating line. The same exact leader can be used to fish balanced leaches, Blobs, or many other varieties of stillwater flies. If regulations allow a second fly to be fished (BC does not), you can attach a second Chironomid with a 1ft section of 6lb fluorocarbon to the barrel swivel. This creates approximately 3ft between your two flies and works well for covering different depths when trying to pinpoint the depth at which the fish are feeding.

When fishing "naked," in general I use the exact same leader, but slightly longer. The general rule is to add approximately 25% of leader length when fishing naked in order to reach the desired depth. I find fishing naked is most effective when fish are feeding in the middle water column on ascending Chironomid pupae. Therefore if you find the fish are feeding on Chironomids at 15ft in 20ft of water, a 20 ft leader will work quite well for suspending a Chironomid pupa fly around 15ft. I highly recommend you give it a try as the takes can be quite exhilarating.

Stillwater (cont.)

Things to think about:

I really like 10ft fly rods when stillwater fishing. The longer rod length makes casting 20ft leaders with a strike indicator and multiple flies easier. You may even see a few guys with 11ft trout spey rods fishing long leaders and Chironomids. Those 11ft trout spey rods cast 20ft leaders like a breeze.

Try a Belgian cast, this is a cast that creates more of an open loop and therefore is less likely to get tangled when casting long leaders with multiple flies. A roll cast works really well too.

I avoid any knots in the primary section of the Chironomid leader as every knot is just one more place to get a tangle. Rather than tie a knot in the leader to add length, simply replace that section with the desired length (this is one reason to build the leader from inexpensive spools of Seaguar).

If I'm fishing in late fall or right after ice off, I know the fish are gonna be in shallow water (<12ft) and I will shorten my primary leader section to approximately 10ft. This allows me to reach the depth I want and it's easier to cast a 12ft leader than a 20ft leader.

It may sound complicated or confusing but its really not. I'm happy to do a demonstration or talk more in detail anytime. Tight lines!! **Steve Wimer**

Educational Content Storage

When I look over the quantity of fishing information that our talented and experienced members have shared it is truly impressive. John Sanders and Marion Hiller are currently working to create a space on our website to store the articles and series so that they may easily be accessed. For example:

Musings of a Knot Nut by John Sanders- You have been waiting for installment 3, and it will be stored for your access on the web. We will put a link to the articles in the next newsletter.

History of Bamboo Rod Making in Bellingham by Hugh Lewis

Fly Formulas with photos that were taught at the Holiday Inn tying lessons.

Lake Fishing with Leech Flies - an interview summarizing leach technique by John Egbert with successful leech fishers Steve Wimer, Dennis Duncan, and Mike Riber.

Planning for Stillwater by Steve Wimer

Also, recordings of past Zoom club presentations will be in the Members section.

If you have items that you no longer use that would help new members gather equipment we are happy to advertise them here. Please send your description with photo to westybobhoney@gmail.com and I will list them for sale.

For Sale - Camping Gear

Camping Gear for sale.

I have for sale a number of pieces of camping gear that I will no longer be using. Not wanting to clog-up the newsletter, I have them listed on a separate document that includes images of the items. Items include Lantern Stand, Collapsible Aluminum Table, Camp Chef two-burner stove, 2 kitchen boxes containing various kitchen items, etc. No prices listed as I am open to fair offers. If you are interested in seeing the list, you can reach me at joboblett@me.com I will forward you a copy.

John Boblett



For Sale - Sage Bolt 8 wt

Sage Bolt 9ft 8wt 4 piece fly rod. Comes with sock and case. Rod is in excellent condition I just don't need so many 8wts. Listed on FB market place for \$325, price for 4CFF members \$250. Steve Wimer 360 333-7095



Conservation Outing May 29

I have scheduled the conservation outing with James Van der Voort for MAY 30. We will meet at NSEA, 3057 E Bakerview, Bellingham, 9:00AM. We will then drive to the riparian restoration site at 5862 N Fork Road, Deming, WA 98244.

Dress appropriately for the weather, bringing boots, gloves, and possibly rain gear. Bring your own lunch.

For prospective new 4CFF members, this activity satisfies one of the requirements to complete your application. Please sign up through Zeffy so we have a count.

Ralph Lloyd, Conservation Chair, FCFF

4CFF Leadership



Board Members

Mike Riber (President) - michaelriber@comcast.net 360-927-4105
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