

Creamton Fly Fishing Club Newsletter



Spring 2026

President's Message

Welcome to another year of great fly fishing on the West Branch of the Lackawaxen River.

After a tough winter, I know we are all eager to get back out on the water. Opening morning is Saturday, April 11, at the cabin. As always, we are planning a hearty breakfast for members. Afterward, many of us will be heading out to do some fishing. Let's hope we'll have better weather this year for Opening Day.

For more than 80 years, the Creamton Fly Fishing Club has offered superior fly-fishing opportunities on beautiful, spring-fed water at a price that's hard to beat. The CFFC Board is committed to continuing to bring those opportunities to our members in 2026.

In the months ahead, we plan to stock 1,800 trout in the stream. These stockies will complement a healthy population of wild browns, native brookies and holdovers, all fed by a healthy ecosystem of bug life.

As most of you know, we are making exciting progress on our stream improvement project. As noted in Paul Lyon's update below, the state has approved our permit, and we plan to spend up to \$75K this year to begin building fish enhancement structures along the club-owned section of the river. We all owe Paul a big debt of gratitude for his hard work and persistence pushing this project. Thank you, Paul!

We enter the new year in great financial shape. Interest in the club continues to grow, and our membership is maxed out. To all new members—welcome! Don't hesitate to reach out to any of us on the Board if you have questions.

Note that we have two Board members who are both longtime members of the club—George Murphy who handles the leases with our landowners, and the "Fishin' Musician" Phil Mancini, who manages our website and digital presence. Phil is intimately familiar with the bug life on the stream, and he offers some valuable spring fishing tips below.

Please read and follow our club rules and remember to respect the landowners whose water we are fishing. It is vitally important that we park only in designated spots, treat landowners' property with care, and make no alterations without getting approval from the owners.

Also please keep in mind that we are a volunteer organization and the Board needs your help to make this club work. I encourage you to raise your hand to help out with stocking, stream cleanup, the summer picnic, property maintenance, and other activities.

Tight lines!

- Mark Lange, President

Membership Update

Interest in the club continues to be strong. We are currently at 75 members with five prospective members on our paid-deposit waiting list. We plan to keep the waiting list at this level while the Board considers whether to expand our membership in line with our goals of financial stability and member enjoyment.

Our booth at the annual Fly Fishing Show in Edison, N.J., continues to be a good investment. Through this year's event, we gained several leads of potential new members wanting to be added to the waiting list.

Going forward, we are revamping the club membership application process to move away from a first-come, first-serve basis to more holistic evaluation of new members' willingness to contribute time, effort and skills to the club. More to come.

I echo Mark in welcoming new members to the club. I look forward to seeing you and other members at the Opening Day breakfast on April 11.

Any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me on TeamReach.

- Thom Clark, Membership Chair

Financial Report

I am pleased to announce that the club continues to be in strong financial shape. In 2025, we had \$78K of revenue, nearly all from memberships, against \$35.6K of expenses. The biggest expenses last year were for stream improvement (\$15K), landowner maintenance and repairs to Baird's bridge (\$13K), stocking (\$10.5K), leases (\$8.5K), insurance & taxes (\$4.4K), and the Farmers Picnic (\$3.3K). We also made a \$5K club donation to the Mead's fire fund, which, combined with donations from members, amounted to a total donation of \$17K. Remarkable!

We enter 2026 with \$163.9K cash in the bank. We expect our biggest operational outlays this year to be, once again, for stocking, leases, and insurance & taxes. We are also budgeting \$75K for the initial phase of the stream improvement project as approved by our members at the annual membership meeting in February.

Reminder that 2026 club dues were due on March 1. Anyone who has not yet paid their dues, please contact me at JMS1701@gmail.com. My preferred method for processing payments is through Square using a card, as checks place an additional burden on preparing our financial

statements. If you are sending a check, please mail to 1905 O'Briens Court, Bethlehem, PA 18015. Any questions, feel free to reach out.

- Joe Savage, Secretary/Treasurer

Stocking Report

We are once again planning to stock 1,800 trout—an equal number of rainbows, brownies, and brookies—in 2025. The stocked trout will complement the abundant natives and holdovers in the stream, ensuring great fishing in the months ahead.

Weather permitting, the stockings are planned for April 8, April 15, April 22, May 6, May 20, and a final stocking at a TBD date in the fall. As always, I would appreciate help with the stockings.

As something new this year, we will be accepting donations for the stocking of memorial fish. Prices will range from \$15 for a 15-inch fish to \$80 for a 24-incher. The memorial fish will be stocked at a pool of your choice. Please reach out at mmulray@icloud.com if you're interested in donating a fish or if you'd like to help with the general stockings.

- Mike Mulray, Stocking Chair

Stream Improvement

As most of you know by now, the PA Fish & Boat Commission has approved our permit to build fish enhancement structures on the contiguous mile of stream owned by the club. We are currently in the process of obtaining proposals from contractors and plan to start construction this summer.

The permit application, which was submitted in early January, included 176 pages of plans and documentation for the project area, which starts just below the Meadows and extends for a mile upstream. Another 67-page permit document must be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for five highway-occupancy permits needed to mobilize equipment and materials. Having reviewed each page of the permit documentation, I have to say that our engineer, ARM Group, was worth every penny.

Back in September, Mark Lange and I had the opportunity to walk our property, plans in hand, with one of the project engineers from ARM Group to see where the 15 structures and random boulder placements will go. The rock structures are designed to be self-scouring and create deeper habitat during high-water events, which means more holding water for trout during low-flow periods. Mark and I both walked away from the tour feeling confident that the project will give our club a solid mile of blue-ribbon trout water for generations to come.

It's been a long road with many ups and downs, but we are getting close to seeing our vision being realized. Stay tuned for details on the streamside ribbon-cutting party this summer!

- Paul Lyon, Vice President/Stream Improvement Chairman

The Apple of My Eye: Preparing for the Grannom Caddis Hatch

Entomologists say Grannom (*Brachycentrus*) and some folks say "shadflies," but to me, it's the Apple Caddis.

These early-spring caddis flies emerge in staggering numbers, triggering incredibly aggressive trout feeding. The sheer volume at the Club makes it a dry-fly angler's dream, with the real action kicking into high gear during the early afternoon or evening. It's some of the absolute best fishing of the season.

To really fish this hatch right, you have to cover the entire lifecycle, from the bottom of the stream up to the surface.

Nymph (Sizes 16 - 18)

These case-builders are active. A Peeking Caddis or a simple, heavily weighted Olive Caddis Larva is essential. You want that bright apple-green body showing. Dead drift these right along the bottom where the trout are actively picking them off the stones.

Emerger (Sizes 16 - 18)

When the hatch actually triggers, trout will often gorge entirely on the pupae rushing to the surface. A LaFontaine Sparkle Pupa tied with a bright green body and a brownish-tan Antron sheath is a killer pattern for this stage. Let it dead drift, then swing it at the end of the run to mimic that upward swimming motion.

Dry (Sizes 16 - 18)

When the trout are finally looking up, nothing beats a classic Elk Hair Caddis. Tie it with a dark olive, grey, or black body, dark tan elk hair wing, and dark dun hackle. Have a few tied up with a green egg sack to mimic the egg-laying females for the evening action. If a strict dead drift isn't producing, don't be afraid to give the fly a tiny twitch now and then to imitate a fluttering, struggling caddis.

When April rolls around and the Apple Caddis starts playing its annual, chaotic gig over the stream, make sure you've got a front-row seat. Get your fly boxes tied up, tune out the rest of the world, and I'll see you at the show.

- Phil Mancini

2026 Key Dates

- April 8, First Stocking
- April 11, Opening Day & Stream Cleanup
- April 15, Second Stocking
- April 22, Third Stocking
- May 6, Fourth Stocking



- May 20, Fifth Stocking
- August 23, Farmers Picnic & Community Gathering
- TBD, Fall Stocking

Important Reminders!

It's vital that all members of the club be familiar with our club rules and follow them. Our single most important asset is our relationship with the landowners who allow us access to fish their water. Please respect them by only parking in approved spots as noted in our stream map in the Members Only section of the website.

Also remember to fill out the Fishing Log whenever you get out on the stream, whether you catch anything or not. Finally, let's keep the river pristine by leaving no trash behind when you fish.

2026 CFFC Board

- Mark Lange, President
- Paul Lyon, Vice President & Stream Improvement Chair
- Joe Savage, Secretary/Treasurer
- Thom Clark, Membership Chair
- Mike Mulray, Stocking Chair
- Dave Miernicki, Buildings & Grounds Chair
- George Murphy, Lease Chair
- Jim Kerr, Marketing & Communications
- Phil Mancini, Digital Media Chair & Club Ambassador