



# Rx Fly Fishing!

Volume XXXVIII

Number III

March 2015

Jerry Neuburger, Editor

Stockton, California

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## Calendar

March 6, 1836 The Alamo fell to General Santa Anna

March 7 Bob McMillan Trout Bout

March 7 Steelhead Smolt release

March 11--General Meeting

March 17-22 Pyramid Outing

March 18 BOD meeting

March 25 Fly of the Month

April 11 Kelsey Bass Ranch outing

## Ed Lawrence will get you hooked on Montana

- It's bring a friend night, do your part

Our March speaker, Ed Lawrence's take on fishing Montana:

"Imagine this: it's the middle of July. The sun is shining. Birds are chirping. Fish are jumpin'.

And you're mowing the lawn. Or washing windows.

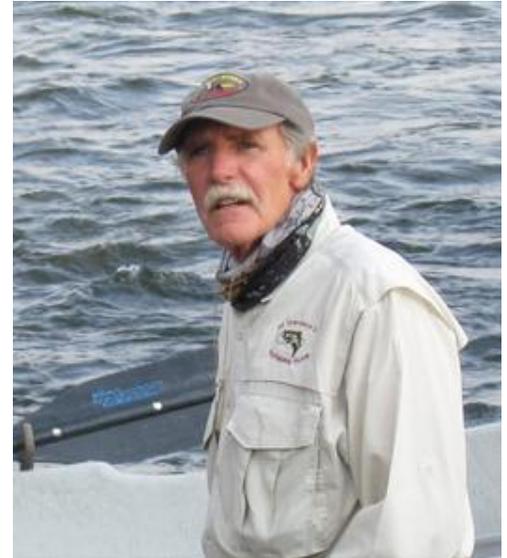
Sad to say, some of your pals are casting flies into the Yellowstone, or Madison, or Missouri Rivers in Montana. They are in pursuit of herds of Rainbow, or Brown, or Cutthroat trout.

You could be there, too.

After all, it doesn't take an intergalactic flight to get to Bozeman. Airlines daily deposit anglers from all points of the compass to this fishing mecca, this breadbasket of blue ribbon water.

In July you'll probably be tossing dry flies. Or nymphs. Or streamers. Take your pick: on many days you'll fish 'em all between sunrise and sunset. So pre-trip prep is easy: just bring your boxes, then check with us to find out if there's something special the fish are keying on. Don't be surprised that a Sculpin works in the morning in July, and a Chernobyl Ant or Yellow Sally in the p.m.

The Good News is that you'll be casting to wild trout, vigorous little nippers that grew up in the rivers, not a hatchery.



Actually, they're not so little. On the Missouri River in the 34-miles long stretch between Wolf Creek and Cascade, the count ranges between 5,000-6,000 fish per mile. In 2013, fish in the 18-inch length represented about 24 percent of the total population.

They're pretty chubby too, since they live in a tailwater with predictable flows and food sources.

The same holds true for the Madison, which exits Yellowstone National Park ('the park') and flows for 30-some ripply miles to Ennis. Most recently, the fish count ranged between 2,500-3,500 fish per mile, and the Rainbow population is on the



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rise.

Mike Vaughn, the Madison river biologist, recently said in an email "By the way, my lead man on our shocking crew this past September says he has never seen more big rainbows in the Pine Butte section. He has been on every crew out there since 1992."

Not to be outdone, the Yellowstone is only a 25-mile jaunt east from Bozeman. She offers 90 miles of free flowing water between 'the park' and Big Timber. While the Missouri's character is that of a large spring creek, and the Madison is one riffle after another, the 'Stone has a different personality. After descending through Yankee Jim Canyon, she meanders through miles of ranch land populated by grasshoppers.

Montana's indigenous Cutthroat population is greater in the upper reaches above Livingston than in the valley.

River access is a piece of cake: if you can put your booties in a stream from a public place, you can fish anywhere on the stream as long as you stay below the

high water mark. Odds are you'll run out of energy before you run out of river.

In addition to your flies, a rod will come in handy. Our go-to rods are 5 – 7 weight, 9-footers. Floating lines work just fine; bring some split shot for fishing nymphs. Fill your vest with 9-foot, 3X – 5X leaders and tippet, and Thingamabobbers.

Summertime temps are in the 70's-80's with an occasional foray into the 90's, so don't bother packing the waders. Include a windbreaker for the occasional thunder shower, and recently purchased sunscreen, not the tube that's been in your vest since two summers ago. A sense of humor's always a welcome addition to the mix (after all, it's only fishing).

In the meantime, don't worry about the lawn. Or windows. They'll be there when you return home, and you'll have great memories to keep you company while you're doing the chores."

Ed has been guiding for 15 years, primarily on the Yellowstone,

Madison, Gallatin and Missouri rivers. Prior to becoming a professional guide, Ed was a professional writer with credits in all of the major fly fishing magazines. He also authored three books. Ed is a graduate of the University of Oregon, grew up in the Bay Area and is still an avid San Francisco Giants fan.

It's bring a friend night this month. With three great outings lined up, the coming series of Fly of the Month, casting lessons starting in April and the opening of trout season, can you think of a better time to introduce someone to the Delta Fly Fishers. Bring a friend. If he or she joins, you even get a discount on your next year's dues.

This month's meeting will meet at the John R. Williams School, Stockton. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 11th at 7:30. Guests and the general public are welcome.

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## The March Outing: Pyramid Lake, Nevada, where the really, really, really big trout live!

By Jerry Neuburger

Look at these photos. These fish were caught by two friends on the same outing within the last week at Pyramid Lake, Nevada. Our club will have an outing starting Tuesday, March 17th, ending Sunday, March 22nd.

You have your choice of camping at the lake or staying at the Nugget with discount rooms arranged through Larry Mettler. It is a come and go affair with club members arriving and leaving on different days. If you'd like to arrange a room through Larry, call him on his cell, 209-481-6478. If you want info on camping, speak to Jerry Neuburger at the club meeting on the 11th.

Jerry will give a little description of the fishing methods at the meeting as well. Basically, it's fishing either by stripping in woolly worms and beetle flies on a sinking line using an eight weight, or fishing midges under an indicator. Most people fish off a ladder since standing in one place in a pair of waders in the cold water can be quite chilling.

To fish and camp at the lake, both a Pyramid Lake fishing license and a camping permit is required. Both can be secured on line at <http://www.pyramidlake.us/pyramid-lake-permits.html>. A single day fishing license is \$9. A three day license, \$24. A single day camping permit is \$9, a three day permit, \$24. You will be fishing

and camping on the Paiute Indian Reservation. You are required to follow the rules and laws of the reservation. A State of Nevada fishing license is NOT required.

Most campers just dry camp at the lake's edge but lodging and food is available at Crosby's Lodge, Sutcliffe 775-476-0400, on the lake shore. An improved RV park with electricity and water (\$35) is also available if you don't want to rough it.

This is NOT an all weather event. If the forecast is for a winter storm during the outing period, the whole trip called off. If it looks iffy, give Jerry 209-369-5752 or Larry, 209-481-6478, a call.



# Westlands is trying a new tactic to get water: Beat a dead horse until it comes back to life.

On Wednesday, February 18, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) held the second day of a public two-day hearing. On Wednesday the SWRCB devoted the entire day to a workshop discussing a Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) and its associated Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) that will lower the Delta's water quality requirements. Earlier this year

Gov. Brown, with the stroke of a pen, took away all environmental protection for the state, allegedly because of the drought. The DCP and TUCP are a continuing process to divert water from the Delta to Westlands Water District, the Kern County Water Authority, and Paramount Farms in the south. In an earlier Delta Fly Fishers Newsletter, you will recall an article about California Sport-

fishing Protection Alliance (CSPA) and Aqua Alliance (AA) suing the Dept. of Water Resources (DWR) and Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) for falsely reporting that they were in compliance with SWRCB's flow standards when they were allegedly sending over 3,000 cfs through the Delta less than the required by law. You will also remember that SWRCB allowed both agencies to act with impunity. Wednesday's meeting was an ongoing attempt at water diversion that is destroying the Delta and its fisheries.

At workshops, the public is asked to submit "blue cards" to address the Board if they want to make statements or presentations. These 5 by 8 inch cards ask the agenda item, time requested, the subject, who you represent, and if you favor or oppose the agenda item. Group's with

known interest on the topics, such as both federal and state agencies, water districts, CSPA, and Restore the Delta, have Power Point presentations are given priority and the time they need to present their comments. The rest of the groups are given 5 minutes at the discretion of the Board Chair. Testimony was given from 9AM to 11PM. Because of the number of speakers and time constraints, some presenters

three busloads of farm workers to the meeting. We were advised to be there early to get a seat. Fortunately, there was dense fog that morning and the farm workers didn't start arriving until an hour after the meeting started. When they finally arrived, 50% of them were wearing Westlands tee shirts printed front and back with the statements: "Water for Humans, Not Fish", and "Man Caused

Drought". Westlands has used these people before and will continue to do so. These farm workers are paid to be at these meetings by Westlands with the help of the Latino Water Coalition (LWC). The LWC is not a 501 (C)(3). It is a group organized by a lobbyist who works for Westlands. Its' leadership is made up of Hispanic's with political ambitions and not for the welfare of the farm workers.

Their attendance had been pre-arranged and the SWRCB gave them immediate priority to speak. About 50% of those

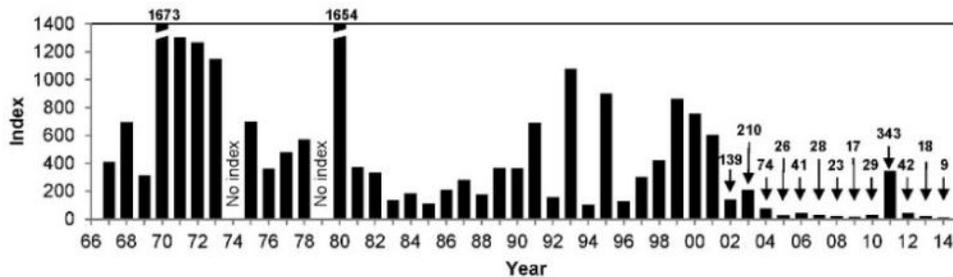


Figure 2. FMWT Delta Smelt annual abundance indices, 1967-2014.

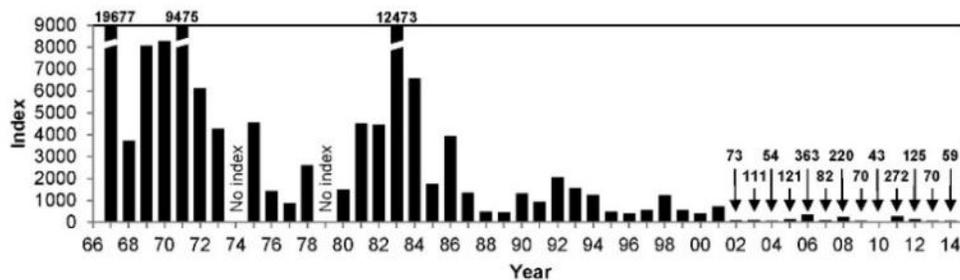


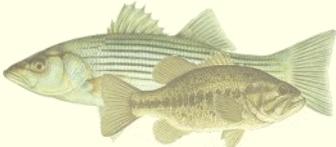
Figure 3. FMWT Age-0 Striped Bass annual abundance indices, 1967-2014.

were not heard.

Restore the Delta found out that Westlands Water District was going to try another public relations stunt by sending

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speaking did not speak English and their comments had to be translated. One non-English speaking woman's comments went on for almost 20 minutes about her health and the hardships of finding work. Then labor contractors working for Westlands spoke. Their "presentations" continued for an hour and a half. Westlands is notorious for politically using farm workers to further the corporation's agenda. They have used them again. There are between 150,000 to 175,000 farm workers in the South San Joaquin Valley working for corporate agriculture who do not have clean drinking water. After the Human Right to Water bill passed both houses in Sacramento, it was vetoed by Gov. Schwarzenegger at the insistence of Westlands. They felt the water for farm laborers would interfere with their access to water for agriculture. The second Human Right to Water bill was passed and signed by Gov. Brown. However, Westlands and other corporations had the bill altered to the point that the farm workers still don't have access to clean water. They continue to have to buy water their water for drinking, bathing, cooking and laundry. This is another example of Westlands hypocrisy.

The TUCP will further weaken the chances for survival of our pelagic fish and migratory species in the Delta. They are near the point of extinction. If the TUCP is initiated in this fourth year of drought, there is a strong probability several species will be lost. Long-term water mismanagement by the state has caused near-irreversible degradation of the of the water quality in the Delta. The Delta

Smelt are at their lowest population since records have been kept. This years winter-run Chinook salmon migration was almost a complete loss. Steelhead returns this year were also at record lows.

Daily we are bombarded with numbers and comparisons to the point of being overwhelmed. Sometimes it's easier to understand how severe things have become by representing the issues graphically. Look at the two graphs I have included to visually show how badly our fisheries have declined in the Delta since the California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife started the Fall Mid-Water Trawls in 1967. This year's Fall Mid-Water Trawl demonstrates just how devastated our Delta fisheries have become. I have taken just two species to represent the situation. In 1970 the trawl of Delta smelt showed 1673 fish taken. In 2014 the trawl number had dropped to 9 fish. That's a loss of 99.5 % of the Delta Smelt! In 1967, the trawl took 19,667 striped bass. In 2014, those numbers had dropped to just 59 fish. That results in a loss of 99.6% of our stripers in 48 years. There is a direct correlation between taking Delta water south via the state and federal water projects, the mismanagement California's water reserves and the loss of our fisheries. Now the Delta and its fisheries are near the point of no return. The state's history of poor water management, its consistent violations of state and federal laws and the Doctrine of Public Trust have put us in this position. It's ongoing "gifting" of our water to those who have

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## The Fly of the Month is back. The March fly, just in time for Kelsey, the foam popper

After a year's absence, the Fly of the Month is back as part of the club's programs. The time, place and cost will be the same, fourth Wednesday of the Month., 6:30pm, Oak Grove Nature Center, cost, \$3.00.

The three flies to be tied this month are foam poppers made from rubber flip flops, just in time for the Kelsey outing. Kits for 12 tiers will be available on a first come, first served basis. Those participating will get enough materials to tie three flies. The club has fly tying equipment for those people who don't have their own.

Jerry Neuburger will demonstrate how the popper heads are made at the beginning of the class. You can see a series of photos on the construction of the fly at <http://www.deltastripers.com/poppersframe1.htm>



### DFF Officers

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Vice President	
John Highsmith	209-369-3251
Secretary	
Karen Keagy	
Treasurer	
Jason Stapleton	209-334-9201
Directors	
Joe Balderston	209-649-0291
Ron Forbes	209-368-5767
Jerry Neuburger	209-369-5752
Larry Schmidt	209-482-8742
Bob Fujimura	209-339-0683
Earl Summers	209-957-6756
Jason Stapleton	209-334-9201
Steve VonBerg	209-327-6161

### Committees

Bob McMillan Trout Bout	
Catfish Derby (June)	
Earl Summers	209-957-6756
Conservation/NCCFFF	
Ron Forbes	209-368-5767
Education	
Fishing Mentor Program	
Membership	
<a href="#">Bob Fujimura</a>	209-339-0683
Outings	
Steve VonBerg, Gil Parker	
Programs	
Al Smatsky	209-368-9261
Bob Sousa	209-368-2683
Property/Historian	
John Keagy	
Publicity	
<a href="#">Steve VonBerg</a>	209-327-6161
Raffles	
Vacant	
Trout Bout (November)	
Charlie Reames	209-642-6704
Webmaster/Newsletter	
<a href="#">Jerry Neuburger</a>	209-369-5752
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neither primary or secondary water rights from corporate farms that are unsustainable are continuing examples the state's mismanagement of our water. If the State Water Resources Control Board implements the Temporary Urgency Change Petition regarding Delta water quality requirements and the drought continues, the Delta we know and its fisheries will no longer exist. Unfortunately, the decision will not be based on science, the Doctrine of Public Trust, nor what is best for the environment. It may be based on the corporate farm greed, the greed of southern water districts, and southern water contractors and facilitated by our politicians. What happened to the Department of Water Resource's Coequal Goals policy? It doesn't exist.

### An Update on the Mokelumne River Anadromous Fish Restoration

Last year the Foothill Conservancy brought together stakeholders on the Moke for reestablishing the anadromous fish lost when East Bay Municipal Utility

District (EBMUD) established their two dams on the Moke thereby losing the spawning ground above Camanche and Pardee Dams. The stakeholders are a variety of groups that have differing interests in the river but want the lost fisheries to be returned. Because the groups have a wide range of interests in the river, the restoration project is complex and resembles the MokeWise project with which Jerry Neuburger and I are involved. Fortunately, this project has only one goal...the reestablishing of fish above Camanche Dam, whereas MokeWise finds itself confronted with many conflicting goals.

Not being a professional aquatic or fish biologist, I assumed the project would be relatively straightforward. It isn't. First the group has has a wide, and sometime conflicting, variety of interests. Some of the groups involved include: US Forest Service, the Foothill Conservancy, EBMUB, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Trout Unlimited, Central Valley Regional Water Board, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, the Me-Wuk Indians,

Caltrout, PG&E, and Delta Fly Fishers to name some involved in the project.

The Lower Moke has been well-studied; the Upper Moke has not. A large amount of information is needed such as geomorphology, temperatures, flows, amphibians and micro-invertebrates present, fish passage information, possible pathology, possible effect of salmon or steelhead on other organisms in the area, permits needed, and the list goes on. This last year much of the data has been accumulated, but more is needed. Michelle Workman, biologist for EBMUD, is currently in the process of preparing a Pilot Document that will discuss key project elements and decisions needed to be made. This document will include what studies need to be included in the study of the Upper Moke. Her presentation will be ready next month and decisions will be made on how we need proceed.

I will keep the club involved with what's happening on the Moke's anadromous restoration.

Ron Forbes

### Bob McMillan Trout Bout is on the books for March 7th. All hands on deck! Help is needed.

All hands on deck! Charlie Reames is looking for a few good men and women to help with this year's Trout Bout on March 7. This is the club's way of giving back to San Joaquin County for using the Oak Grove facilities. Also, Bob McMillan was a big supporter of DFF and helped us with the early trout bouts. Charlie would like the early crew to arrive about 6:00--- and yes, that is AM! Early volunteers need to

enter at the east gate, not the main gate. If you cannot be there that early, enter the main gate around 8:00AM and identify yourself as a DFF member. Prizes are awarded around noon and the event ends between 12:30 and 1:00PM.

A good number of volunteers is needed as DFF does the sign ups, weigh ins, and provides food and drink at the boathouse

and around the pond. This is a great way to get involved with your club. This is a wonderful opportunity for new members to meet veteran (old) members and perform a public service to our local communities. It is quite rewarding to see kids catch a fish of a lifetime---their big smiles are infectious!! For more details, contact Charlie Reames at [209-642-6704](tel:209-642-6704).

### Report on the Stanislaus Float: Yes, fish were caught, people had fun, and the weather held!



By Gil Parker

We kept reading the weather reports, the ones that said early on that we would get rain, and then the ones that said rain on Sunday not Saturday, and one said not until Monday. Well .... while Stockton got a couple sprinkles, our morning began with rain and although not torrential, it consistently rain all morning. To eight fly fishermen, a little rain would only

increase our success factor, so not to worry. The good news was we were ready for it and the outside temperature made it comfortable, and later in the day the sun was it's best. So with each of us not knowing about what to expect, we set out on a Huck-Finn like adventure, with four pontoons, a raft, and a two man canoe. The Stanislaus eight!

Almost within thirty minutes, Joe B. landed an 18 inch rainbow and our optimism grew. As it turned out Mike N. the

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originator and assigned fishmeister, was able to lead us. Between Joe and Mike showing the rest of us how and what to fish, others began to get on the score board. Some of us didn't feel the tug, but Mother Nature regaled us with a beautiful river set in a winter California foothill setting with lush greenery under a covering of leafless oaks and cottonwoods. The Stanislaus was rolling along at a low cfs but was swift enough to make you glad you were wearing a life jacket. This is not a river nor is any river, to be floated alone. We learned a few things, on this outing, and as most adventures usually do, taught us to be safe. In the five miles we floated, we were in very thin and swift parts and some shallow water, and some deep pools in a canyon. Lots of overhangs and both dead and live trees in the water.

We nymph fished, dry fly fished, and had we been ready and equipped we might have streamer fished. The river and it's residents lives by one rule, ready or not here we are!

Currents in rivers are tricky and the rocks unforgiving, so I offer this little advice if you have trouble walking a river shoreline do not think that a float offers an easier path. With that said, each of the Stanislaus eight individually have had more fishing success on the water than we did on this trip but none of us had more fun with

eight guys hopscotching down a river on a Saturday in February. The company was excellent with a lot of humor and a couple cheap thrills.



## The April Outing: Our Annual Kelsey Bass Ranch Outing will be held on Saturday April 11<sup>th</sup>,



should be in the mid to upper 60's. The lake should be perfect for all of those Leo's Poppers and Jerry's flip-flop poppers that you have been making.

Last year the lake record was broken by a conventional angler that hauled in a 16 lbs 12 oz bass in mid-January, on the fly fishing end; one SoCa angler landed a black bass over 14 lbs on a wooly-bugger and a bay area angler landed a black bass over 8 lbs on a popper. The California State record for blue gill record was not reestablished but the lake did produce one 3 lbs 14 oz. The lake fished very well all through the summer months.

times while boarding, disembarking or on board the watercraft."

You may sign up any time by emailing [algofish@softcom.net](mailto:algofish@softcom.net) or calling Al Smatsky at (209) 368-9261, please do so by April 8<sup>th</sup>. We will have a sign-up sheet available at the March and April meetings. The cost for this year outing is \$85 per person. A barbeque lunch provided and prepared by Al is included in your entry fee.

Hope to see you all there!

The Kelsey Ranch is located about 28 miles east of Turlock, and east of Snelling, CA. Kelsey Lake is a 125 acre impoundment stocked with trophy size Florida Black Bass. For those members that have not been there before, please contact Al and he will send you directions.

Every year this outing is very well attended by our Club members and I don't think that it will be any different this year. The lake is almost full and in very good condition. By the time we fish the lake in April, the bass will have already spawned, and the water temperature

**RECOMMENDATION:** The following requirement applies to participants in Guided Float Trip Outings and those Outings where participants use owned, rented or loaned watercraft such as, but not limited to, boats, canoes, kayaks, prams, pontoon boats and float tubes: "Each participant should wear a Coast Guard approved protective safety flotation device (SFD) at all



## If not helping at the Trout Bout, you could give Joe a hand releasing classroom steelhead

Joe Balderston is looking for a few members to help with his Hatchery in the Classroom program. Students will be releasing salmon fry at 11:00 AM on Saturday March 7 at Van Assen Park on

McIntyre Road. This is a casual event, with families bringing their own picnic lunches. Joe would like a couple of members to show some of the parents how a fly rod works. Students will also be doing stream samples for insect identi-

fication---insect guides will be available. Students will also visit the hatchery to see what is in the troughs. The event will be over by 2:00 PM. If you would like to be part of this great activity, please contact Joe at [joesteelhead@aol.com](mailto:joesteelhead@aol.com).

# A club is only as good as the effort the members put into it.

How do you measure up? Fill out the questions and add up your score.

Since September, 2014:

I have attended \_\_\_\_ regular club meetings.

Attended the Installation dinner \_\_\_\_\_ ( score 2 or 0)

Attended \_\_\_\_\_ board meetings

Attended \_\_\_\_\_ club outings (score 3 for each one)

Attended the opening day on the Moke \_\_\_\_\_ ( score 2 or 0)

Attended \_\_\_\_\_ fly tying sessions (score 2 for each one)

Brought \_\_\_\_\_ friends to meetings

Led an outing \_\_\_\_\_ (score 5 for each one)

Assisted at a trout bout or catfish derby \_\_\_\_\_ (score 3 for each one)

Invited another club member fishing \_\_\_\_\_ (score 1 for each time)

Made friends with a new club member \_\_\_\_\_ (score 2 for each one)

Held office as an officer or director \_\_\_\_\_ (score 5 for each one)

Hold an activity chair \_\_\_\_\_ (score 5 for each one)

Asked our club president how I can help \_\_\_\_\_ (score 5 for each one)

Total \_\_\_\_\_

Score 41— ?, you will be the next Fly Fisher of the year!

Score 32— 40, you're an active member, an asset to the club

Score 18— 25, maybe this year will be the year you really get involved

Score 10— 18, how can we start a fire under your feet?

Score 0 — 9, yes I'm a couch potato. But there's still hope!

## Rx Fly Fishing! Advertising Rates

2 column inches each newsletter issue for the year for \$400, six months \$200, quarter \$100, one month \$40. The ad may include artwork and will link to the advertiser's website.

Additional column inches of ad space may be purchased at \$200 for the year, \$100 for six months, \$50 for a quarter year, \$20 per month.

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For additional information please phone or e-mail [Jerry Neuburger](mailto:Jerry.Neuburger), Editor 209-369-5752

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