



Rx Fly Fishing!

The monthly newsletter of the Delta Fly Fishers!

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Jerry Neuburger, Editor

Stockton, California

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Calendar

- May 5, One Fly Contest, White Pines Lake, Arnold. 8am.
- May 9, General Membership Meeting, John R. Williams School.
- May 11th FlyDay Night Fly Tying, House of Coffees, Lodi
- May 16, BOD Meeting, Oak Grove Park
- May 19, American River Shad Outing
- May 20-23, South Fork Reservoir Outing, Elko, Nevada
- May 23, Fly of the Month, Oak Grove Park
- June 2, Catfish Derby, Oak Grove Park
- June 13, DFF Barbecue, Oak Grove Park

“But let a woman in your life!”

Henry Higgins, My Fair Lady



And boy has the club let some women in our lives. We have five very active ladies and some promising newcomers as well.

It was very visible at the last board meeting with three of them attending. Karen Keagy has been the club secretary for a number of years, volunteers for numerous duties including being a stalwart at the San Joaquin County Trout Bouts and Catfish Derbies. In addition, Karen, along with her husband John, another club workhorse, participates in many of the club outings and even better, catches fish!

Dena Mason, our Membership and Education Chair is another member who really works hard for the club. In addition to taking on the membership duties this year, she is in charge of the Salmon in the Classroom program and helps numerous classes in both the Stockton and Lodi school districts secure tanks and the training it takes to participate in the program. And if there's anything else that can make the club run smoother, Dena will be among the first to volunteer to take it on.

Amy Terra, our new vice president has been fly fishing for only two years but in that short time has become a skilled intermediate fly fisher. She works at it every weekend, She, like the previous two, raises her hand to volunteer for anything the club needs and more. She in addition to filling in when needed for the president, she manages the club website, has organized the Fly of the Month tying and the Flyday

Night tying at the House of Coffee. She's the club's principal ambassador of good will and is responsible for several new members.

Jean Fujimura while not an officer or director, is a frequent attendee at club activities, can be seen helping out at the Trout Bouts, and helps mentor those new members that need a little help on the water. She and her husband Bob, attend most of the outings and are constantly expanding their fishing experiences by adding new water to their knowledge base.

I live with the last lady to be mentioned. Jeanette, my wife, was an avid fly fisher for a number of years, and caught everything from trout to Dorado. Then she discovered bridge and quilting and hasn't been on the water for a while. However, when our new treasurer unexpectedly passed away, she volunteered to take on the club's duties as Treasurer. She shortly put the books in order, set up free digital accounting, arranged for the club's bank account to be reviewable on line and set up credit card purchasing. The next step is to get her back on the water.

This newfound female activism is long overdue but welcome. I hope the old-timers can handle the change. Just remember guys, the girls are not there on the outings to cook dinners and wash dishes. In fact, it would be great if the guys stepped up and told the ladies to sit back and just enjoy the fishing and the outdoors. Everything else will be taken care of.

This month's meeting features Mark Cottrell speaking on the Stanislaus River.

Another great raffle is planned along with a new buy a square raffle for a #7 Redington Reel and Rio line, and some of Bill Beckett's home baked goodies as well.

Doors open at 6:30pm, John R. Williams School, 2450 Meadow Ave, Stockton, CA 95207

Bring a friend!

Stanislaus River the focus of Mark Cottrell's presentation at the GM meeting, May 9th, J.R. Williams School

Mark Cottrell, a fly fishing guide from Sonora, CA, will speak on fly fishing the Stanislaus River and surrounding lakes from Kennedy Meadows to Oakdale. Mark grew up in the Burney, CA area, fly fishing Hat Creek, the Pit River and other trout waters in Nor Cal. He has tied commercially and taught fly tying for over 25 yrs. He has also guided for 20 years for the Mother Lode Fly Shop and independently.

And of course, another great raffle along with a new format, a "buy a square" raffle of a Redington Behemoth 7-8 reel and Rio #8 WF-F line. If the squares are not totally sold, the sheet will continue at the

June barbecue.

Arrive early so you can gobble down some of Bill Beckett's home creations and make sure you drop a buck or two in the tip jar so he can keep buying the goodies.

The meeting will be at John R. Williams School on May 9th. Doors will open at 6:30 PM, with the meeting starting at 7:00.



Last chance to sign up for the One Fly Contest is today, Monday. This is a really fun event for a good cause. Join your fellow members and let's win this one!

Do you enjoy friendly competition or what to learn the basics of stillwater trout fishing from watching experts? Come out to the annual One Fly Contest hosted by our neighboring club the Calaveras Fly Fishers at White Pine Lake near Arnold on the first Saturday morning in May. Delta Fly Fishers members have regularly attended this annual competition and have often won the two awards for most trout and the biggest fish landed using a single fly. For DFF members who have participated in the past, the details of the event and competition is exactly the same as previous years and without the 2017 hassles of dealing with flood damage to the lake access road.

At the end of the competition, the Calaveras Fly Fishers offer a great



barbecued tri-tip sandwich lunch with all the fixings. The fee for the day is \$25 and covers the competition, any prizes and the lunch.

Bob Fujimura has volunteered to be the liaison and fish miester for this event for the past few years. Bob needs a head count of those attending by Monday night, the 30th. If the newsletter's out in time and you want to join, you can contact Bob Fujimura at deltaflyfishers@gmail.com or (209) 339-0683

DFF Officers



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 John and Karen Keagy

Catfish Derby (June)
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Trout Bout (November)
 Charlie Reames

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Club outing to the American River for shad looks to be a real hit. Flows are good and fish are already in the system. A special clinic and fly tying demo to be held at the House of Coffee during FlyDay Night Tying, May 11th.

The DFF anglers are lucky to be in one of the few areas in the nation that supports an annual migration of the American Shad. Originally an East Coast fish, American Shad were introduced into California waters in the late 1800's by the California Fish and Game Commission. After successfully anchoring themselves in the Sacramento River system, the species spread to other rivers on the west coast as far as Oregon. Known as, "the poor man's tarpon," the fish swim upriver from the ocean in April and May in huge schools.

Although the number of fish had declined for the past few years, they experienced a huge comeback last year, a wet water year. The conditions for another banner year are present and anglers would be wise to take advantage of this rebirth while it is happening.

Fishing for shad involves casting and

swinging a single fly on a sink tip line. Equipment can be single handed rods, switch rods and spey rods.

The club is fortunate that one of its members, Al Smatsky, has fished and guided for these fish for over forty years and is willing to share his secrets to club members. He'll hold a clinic at the House of Coffees on Friday night, May 11th at 6:30. After his presentation, he'll demo tying two American River hot flies, the Bloody Mariah and the Wet Pinky. Bring your tying equipment but if it's just too crowded, instead buy a kit to tie five



Click on the photo to be taken to the YouTube video of how to tie this super hot American River shad fly.

of the flies for \$5.00.

You can also sign up for the club outing to take place on the River on May 19th. This is a "full featured" outing with on the water instruction and a club lunch. Tablecloths included.

Sign up for the May 19th shad outing on the American at the May GM meeting. It promises to be a heck of a good time!

I'd guess that most of the club members have not fished for American Shad. And the question is, WHY?

We live in the heart of west coast shad country with great runs on the Sacramento, American, Feather and Yuba rivers. The fish has been a part of the California scene for almost 150 years. They are big, averaging from 3-5 pounds with an occasional eight pounder possible, come to the fly easily and once hooked can deliver some reel spinning runs.

The fish, an East Coast native, was shipped to the West Coast in the late 1880's on the old transcontinental railroad, yup that thing built by Crocker, Stanford, Huntington and Hopkins. The schools spread throughout the Sacramento River system and then spread to the coastal rivers in Oregon as well.

They were so populous at one time that the preferred method of taking the fish was bumping for shad, a large hand net used in back of an outboard motor trimmed up to near the surface to create a

lot of noise.

Because of water diversions and bouts of drought, the species declined in recent years but was found to have a big comeback with last year's plentiful water. When club member, Al Smatsky, guided on the Yuba last year, some anglers boated over 100 fish in a day's guided fishing.

Al has volunteered to lead a club outing on the American on May 19th and will conduct a pre fishing seminar at the House of Coffee on May 11th at 6:30. In addition to the seminar, he'll tie an example pattern of a proven American River fly, the Bloody Mariah. Kits to tie five flies will be available to members at \$5.00 each.

Fishing is by wading, and casting and swinging a fly on a 250-325 grain sink tip line. 7-8 weight rods are recommended as well as switch and spey rods.

Current plans are for a rendezvous location at the picnic area at Upper Sunrise at 7am. Al will advise anglers of the best



locations to fish and check in with anglers during the morning. A club lunch will be served at the Upper Sunrise picnic area at 1:00pm. A fee is charged for park entrance.

Participants are asked to sign up for this outing at the club's May meeting.

The Mokelumne is our river guys and girls. Let's help the Foothill Conservancy celebrate!



To celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the Foothill Conservancy will host critically acclaimed, award-winning photographer and author, Tim Palmer in Jackson on Tuesday, May 8. Palmer will present a slide show of his new book, *Wild and Scenic Rivers: An American Legacy*. The presentation will take place at the Senior Center in Jackson, 229 New York Ranch Road, starting at 7:00 p.m. Suggested donation of \$10. "We are thrilled to welcome Tim back to this area with his wonderful new book," said Foothill Conservancy Executive Director Amanda Nelson.

"This book celebrates the 50th anniversary of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, which protects America's outstanding rivers for generations to come. Our own Mokelumne River has been found eligible for inclusion as a national wild and scenic river."

The event is open to the public, wine and beer will be sold. Tim Palmer's books

and Foothill Conservancy river merchandise will be available for purchase. *Wild and Scenic Rivers: An American Legacy*, published by Oregon State University Press, presents an illuminating portrait of the world's premiere system for the protection of natural rivers. In the book and presentation, Palmer reveals the history and essential policies of the wild



and scenic program and showcases spectacular color photos of designated rivers from around the nation.

Regarding returning to our area, Palmer said, "From years past, vivid memories linger of canoeing the Mokelumne's Electrica Run, hiking down the North Fork, and skiing at the headwaters. I can't wait to return to this exquisite river and its lively community of protectors."

Palmer is the author and photographer of 25 books about rivers, the environment and adventure travel. As a writer, citizen conservationist and former environmental planner, he has been involved in the National Wild and Scenic River System almost since its founding. To see Palmer's work and learn more about him, visit www.timpalmer.org.

For more information or to sign up, call 223-3508 or send an email to [Carolyn Schooley](mailto:Carolyn.Schooley).

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The club is going interstate with this May 20-23rd outing to Southfork Reservoir, a blue ribbon lake near Elko Nevada

Hosts Bob and Jean Fujimura are fishmiesters for the South Fork Reservoir, NV outing during May 20-23. This is one of Nevada's blue ribbon fisheries and presents variety as well as quantity. Wipers (a cross between white bass and striped bass,) largemouth, and trout all inhabit the lake in large numbers. While anglers can target any one of these three species, there's no guarantee that something else will be on the other end of their line when they reel in. The lake can either be waded or fished from a boat, pontoon boat or float

tube. Five weight rods are recommended with fishing techniques revolving around both stripping and indicator fishing.

Camping is available at the lake at two campsites at reasonable rates.

The lake is located about 470 miles from Stockton, near Elko, Nevada. Although the pre event meeting has passed, anglers planning to attend should contact Bob Fujimura deltaflyfish-



ers@gmail.com or (209) 339-0683 evenings and let him know they plan to attend.

Sierra trout flies featured at May Fly of the Month meeting to be held at Oak Grove Park, May 23rd. It's an open tying session where participants are encouraged to share their patterns and materials. A fun evening!

The last fly tying session of the spring season will take place at Oak Grove Park on Wednesday, May 23. Instead of having an instructor, the club's fly tiers are invited to come to the event with their own favorite pattern, the ma-

terials to tie it and a little extra so that they can share. This is a great chance to swap ideas on what works well in the Sierra streams and lakes.

Amy will open the center at 6:30pm and it's expected that the

evening will last about an hour and a half, until around 8:00pm.

The club is not furnishing any materials for this event so no fee is being charged for materials.

The San Joaquin County Parks and Rec Catfish Derby is scheduled for Saturday, June 2nd. Please keep that date open so you can lend a hand. Our volunteering is one of the reasons the county can still offer these events since they rely on us for the manpower to make the event a success.

Some photos from the Kelsey Bass Ranch, Beardsley and Village West outings. More can be found at the [club's website](#) and the club's [Facebook page](#).



It's Not Just the Delta. The San Francisco Bay Estuary Is in Dire Straits Also

"Game fish are too valuable to be caught only once. The finest gift you can give any fisherman is to put a good fish back, and who knows if the fish you caught isn't someone's gift to you?"

Lee Wulf

It's easy to become preoccupied with the ongoing battle to stop Gov. Brown's tunnel project and protect the Delta, its' environment, and its' fisheries. The problems in the Delta are not happening in a vacuum. Unfortunately, the state, it's agencies, anti-tunnels groups, and the media overlook the devastation happening to the San Francisco Bay Estuary (SFE). Last October, Jonathan Rosenfield, lead scientist for the Bay Institute, wrote an article criticizing the hypocrisy of the initial Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) and the current California Water-Fix (CWF) proposal. Rosenfield's article is entitled, "State's Own Evidence Shows the Tunnels Project Will Harm Fish." The Bay Institute is a non-profit conservation group that seeks to protect the San Francisco Bay's conservation, restoration, and its' watershed from the Sierras to the Pacific Ocean.

Rosenfield points out that for years the pro-tunnel groups have maintained their project will not increase the volume of water diverted from the Delta. But state documents such as the Biological Assessment, the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (RDEIR/SDEIS) prove this to be a false. Today, less than half of the water from the Sierras flows into the ocean. During the recent 5-year drought even less water flowed into the sea. To quote Rosenfield, "An overwhelming amount of research leaves no doubt that the San Francisco Bay Estuary - the largest on the Pacific



coast of the America's - has been severely damaged by decades of this unsustainable water withdraw."

San Francisco Bay's environment has suffered immensely from the continuing water diversions, just as the Delta's environment has. He points out that San Francisco Bay is also facing the imminent danger of the extinction of several native fish species. San Francisco Bay supports both recreational and commercial fishing

highly toxic to many species including humans. With the lack of moving fresh water flowing through the Delta and Bay, a highly toxic green scum forms on the water surface and poses a serious danger to many species including livestock and humans.

Rosenfield reaffirms that science verifies fresh water from Lower Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Mokelumne Rivers must reach San Francisco Bay to prevent the



Aquatic Invasive Species Impact Everyone Impede Water Diversions

Thick mats of non-native aquatic invasive vegetation can quickly grow around and block water intakes for municipal water supply and agricultural irrigation. Dressinid mussels can invade and grow on or inside of water supply and irrigation equipment causing the pumps to work harder and/or break down.

for salmon and other species. The continuing loss of the Bay's fishery is causing the loss of all the support business's in the greater Bay area and the loss of thousands of commercial fishing jobs from Morro Bay to Oregon.

Because of the lack of the historic water flows, the Bay estuary is more easily dominated by invasive and non-native species. The San Francisco Bay is now the most invaded aquatic region in the world. Of the invasive aquatic species, 66% are considered harmful to the Bay's environment. Unfortunately, the Bay is now and will continue to be dominated by invasive water-weeds and other non-native species.

In both the Bay and the Delta, blooms of toxic cyanobacteria will be happening more often. These blooms will occur in slow moving water which is nutrient-rich during the warmer months of the year. Cyanobacteria produce biologically active compounds, many of which are

continuing decline of the estuary. He questions those individuals such a Dr. Peter Moyle who offers "tepid support" for the "misleading named California WaterFix" and claims the CWF will increase water flows to preserve native fish. However, state documents verify the CWF will reduce flows to the Delta and Bay. Rosenfield also points out that for years the "cheerleaders" of a tunnel project have said the "status quo is unsustain-



able." Of course, it is. He shows how the state's "sales pitch" is nothing more than "an exercise in rationalizing maintenance

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of the status quo and avoiding analyses that demonstrate that this project will make conditions worse." The state of California no longer asserts the CWF will improve the current Bay and Delta conditions but now claims the CWF will not increase the current near-extinction status of the species. Gov. Brown and his pro-tunnel advocate's reversals, once again, show why the CWF should never be built. California state law requires the reduction of reliance on fresh water from the Delta to protect our endangered species, our fisheries, and water quality. Gov. Brown and state agencies continue to ignore the law.

Dr. Rosenfield concludes his article with observations that are true but difficult for most of us to accept. First, we now live in a country that chooses to ignore strong scientific evidence. Many choose to take a political point of view rather than a critical analysis of what is really going on. We also choose to listen to those who are trying to sell us "extraordinarily expensive projects promoted with the most cynical rhetoric. California deserves better. It's time we follow the best available science to protect our imperiled ecosystems by investing in durable innovations that will secure California's water supplies in the future." He's right.

The Board of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) Votes to Fund \$ 10.8 Billion For the Cali-

fornia WaterFix

On April 11, 2018, the board of the MWD voted to fund 2/3 of the supposed cost of the CWF. The vote was not without major disagreements. But Los Angeles and the San Diego Water District



disagreed with the vote. Pro-Protect groups have taken a step forward with this vote but the tunnels are certainly not a done deal. In June of this year, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) will decide if the project can divert water from the Lower Sacramento River near Courtland where the project is to start. Since all of the members of the SWRCB are appointees of Gov. Brown it's difficult imagine them not voting to proceed with the project.

A major hurdle for the CWF will be the 58 groups who oppose the project. The opposition groups represent many diverse reasons for their opposition to the tunnel project. Included in groups opposing the CWF are environmental and fisheries

organizations, northern and southern cities, native American organizations, and a variety of area governmental agencies. Some of the lawsuits will challenge the projects' financial arrangements. Lawsuits can drag on for long periods of time.

At the earliest, the project will not be able to begin until 2019 and would take a minimum of 15 years to complete. Gov. Brown leaves office this November and it is questionable if his successor would want to start a project with so many questionable issues. For several years Gov. Brown has maintained the cost will be \$17 billion. Since the project plans are only 10-15% completed, how can its' real cost be known? It can't be. Yet Brown's \$17 billion cost is still used as the benchmark for the CWF. Several years ago, Wetlands Water District did cost research and found that \$60 billion was a more likely to be the real cost rather than the \$17 billion Gov. Brown claims. Remember when Cal Trans estimated the retro-fit on the San Francisco Bay Bridge would be \$1.5 billion? It was over \$6.5 billion in reality with more work that needs to be completed. More recently, the former Director of the Dept. of Water Resources said the Lake Orville spillway disaster would cost \$200 million to repair. However, with additional costs still coming, the spillway has already cost \$875 million! Given Gov. Brown's history, it is not possible to believe his WaterFix cost estimates. Both he and our state agencies are continuing to play fast and loose with the truth.

C.J. Webb's Eastern Sierra Focus is back!

By CJ Webb

Weather Conditions

Winter at Virginia Lakes started early October 2017 with 14" of snow and another 10" the following week. The County kept all the roads clear through November 15, the end of trout season only to have the high elevation waters freeze by November 5th. The bulk of the winter arrived between late February and late March with one storm on March 20th of 30" on Conway Summit for a total of 62" in March. April was the most unstable month in my 41 years on Conway Summit. Our daffodils are up

about 5 inches and seem to be reluctant to pop out, so I'm guessing we are in for a couple more spring storms. April 23 produced the warmest day of spring, a whopping 72 degrees, clear blue sky with billowy clouds which is typical for this time of year. Looks like opening weekend will get some mixed weather at all elevations starting Thursday, clear Friday, possible snow Saturday clearing on Sunday, a typical opening weekend for the high country.

State Water Resources Board stated that Mammoth's snow pack is 70% of normal; Rock Creek 50%.

The snow pack report a month ago, showed 2017-18 run-off year at the second worst in history.

Legislative News:

April 18, 2018 AB-986 Hunting and Sport Fishing Licenses: Sport fishing license duration: reduction in license fees for veterans was "Referred to Committee on Natural Resources, W. and Veterans Affairs".

In February, the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation overwhelmingly approved S. 1520, the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management

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Act of 2017. This legislation calls for critically important updates to the oversight of federal fisheries, including adding more tools to the management toolbox, improving data-collection techniques, and examining some fishery allocations that are based on decades-old decisions. Since introduction in July of 2017, it has received strong bipartisan support from 12 cosponsors representing coastal and non-coastal states alike. In addition, a broad coalition of organizations representing the saltwater recreational fishing and boating community has endorsed the Modern Fish Act and highlighted the importance of updating the nation's fisheries management system to more accurately distinguish between recreational and commercial fishing.

CALIFORNIA DEPT. OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

The CDFW is inviting trout anglers to voice their interest, needs, and novel ideas about the statewide management of trout resources. A series of upcoming public meetings will provide opportunities to learn about and discuss three specific topics of Interest: 1. the revision of the Strategic Plan for Trout Management (last plan was in 2003), 2. The creation of a new Strategic Plan for Trout Hatcheries, and 3. Simplification of inland trout angling regulations.

CDFW will compile public comments and use them to help guide development in all three of these areas. First meeting is in Bishop April 11, Truckee on April 18, Los Alamitos on April 26, Sacramento on May 2nd, Sausalito on May 5, Fresno on May 10th and Redding on May 15, 2018. For additional information contact Andrew Hughan at andrew.hughan@wildlife.ca.gov or (916)322.8944.

Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW):

Every year, CDFW trout hatchery releases trophy sized trout to approved waters and a chance to catch a big one. Trophy trout are categorized by the Department as larger

than 2.99 pounds each but can be much larger.

Their "super-catchable" trophy will run between 1.1 and 2.99 pounds each which are raised specifically to provide public anglers a chance to tie into one in approved waters once they have fulfilled their part in providing fertilized eggs for populating fish of all life stages in their statewide program of trout hatcheries. These trout require more resources than catchable-size trout. Younger fingerlings to catchable size grow quickly and efficiently convert fish food to body size and that efficiency drops with age. So by weight, 93% of all hatchery trout are catchable with most 1/2 pound or approximately 12 inches in length. In 2018, 100,000 pounds of trout released for recreational angling will be in the trophy or super-catchable size. Areas to receive them are listed on their web-site as "news Feb 28, 2018". Inyo and Mono counties will get 35 waters planted from Bishop Creek and as far north as the West Walker river. The trophy trout will be tagged with CDFW identification. Updated trout releases will be on their web-site (<http://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FishPlants/>) or call their specific region (Inland Deserts 855.887.1275) Stocking allocations will be at the same level as last year (605,000 pounds) and the Mono County Enhancement Program will be stocking rainbows from Desert Springs, Oregon again, but poundage is dependent on the program allocations which should be available shortly.

Nimbus Basin closed to all fishing as of March 2018

Planning is currently underway and construction is scheduled to begin in federal fiscal year 2019. For the EIR/EIS go to (www.usbr.gov/mp/ccao/hatchery).

For more information contact Jeanine Phillips at (916) 358.2030.

RARE FISH RETURNS to local Waters in 71 years.

On August 24, 2017, US Fish and Wildlife Service biologists, in conjunction with members of the USFA

and the CDFW, released 86 Paiute cutthroat trout in Silver King Creek above Llewellyn Falls in the Carson Iceberg Wilderness area of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. The project was the culmination of two years of planning to enhance the Silver King Creek population that had been devastated by years of drought and then uncharacteristic flooding. To learn more go to (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/r5/home/?cid=FSEPRD561732&width+full>). It's a great article on the efforts of many years and many individuals to see this come to fruition. Please take a moment to read it.

CDFW stated most streams that have an approved pre-stocking evaluation are flowing well and have been stocked for the season opener.

Also, those with an adventurous spirit and strong legs, Kirman, Fremont, Lane and Roosevelt Lakes in the upper West Walker River area are accessible as are Parker and Little Walker just north of the June Lake loop. For catch & release anglers, Parker, Walker, Rush and Hot Creek should provide good opportunity for this opener.

CDFW has an updated free downloadable app for Freshwater Sport Fishing Regulations application at <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/regulations>. It tracks your current GPS location and will tell you the regulations of the water where you are standing and regulations for waters within a designated area or approximately a five-mile radius.

Reminder to try the Anglers Guide to the Calif. Heritage Trout Challenge on their web-site at <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Fishing/Inland/HTC> - This program encourages anglers to "Take the Challenge," explore new waters across the state, and appreciate the diverse recreational fishing opportunities California has to offer about the program.

CDFW Releases a Half-Million Steelhead into Feather River February 12, 2018

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Hatchery trucks stocked a half million steelhead smolts on the Feather River near Yuba City. The 125,000 fish released were the first of the fish reared from eggs rescued from the FR Hatchery during last year's spillway failure.

Engineers redesigned the water in-flow system using city water for the incubating steelhead. They also brought in massive charcoal filters to purify the water and reconfigured the aeration system making the release of more than 500,000 steelhead possible.

Feather River steelhead is on the state and federal list of species of concern and the hatchery is the key in maintaining the viable run in the Central Valley. The eggs in the hatchery during the Feather River spillway event represented a year-age class of steelhead.

Mojave River Hatchery in San Bernardino County Reopens - The Hatchery in northern San Bernardino County has reopened after an extensive and much needed overhaul to promote more efficient trout production for anglers in Southern California.

CDFW invested several hundred thousand dollars on the project, including pressure washing and disinfecting 6,000 linear feet of fish rearing ponds and associated plumbing, coating all fish rearing surfaces with Food and Drug Administration approved epoxy coating to improve fish culture conditions and installing new manifolds for the water recirculation loop to improve efficiency.

Fish production at Mojave River Hatchery has already resumed and healthy juvenile fish have been brought in from CDFW hatcheries for additional growth at the renovated facility. Millions of fertile trout eggs are also being shipped to Mojave for incubation and rearing into catchable fish for stocking later in 2018, and CDFW is continuing to stock catchable fish in Southern California from sister hatcheries farther north.

In addition to the raceway renovation and improvements, contractors upgraded the plumbing from the hatchery building, refurbished the well pump motors, and excavated the two settling ponds and installed new, UV-resistant rubber lining. The last major renovation work took place more than 45 years ago.

HOT CREEK WILD TROUT area 2nd year stocking

The CDFW has completed their electro-shocking survey of Hot Creek for the 2nd year in a row following up on drought impacts from the last few years. The results were favorable (increased numbers) but some size classes are missing and they have elected to continue with their three-year plan developed in 2016. This plan involves an annual shocking survey in 2016, 2017 and 2018 followed by the stocking of subcatchable Rainbow and Brown trout to supplement the limited successful reproduction experienced during the drought. Volunteers stocked trout by hand/bucket with fin clipped fish to aid in distinguishing hatchery fish from those naturally produced in the stream. They were stocked on November 3, 2017. More information on this unique fishery is available at <http://www.fgc.ca.gov/policy/p2fish.aspx>

CONWAY Ranch Update - February 18, 2018

On October 3, 2017 the Mono County Board of Supervisors directed staff to put out an RFP for cattle grazing activities on Conway Ranch, the RFP was issued and 3 proposals were received in response. The Board was given three options for proposals received, and 3 options relating CEQA upon identifying a preferred proposal, discussed the fiscal impact, and were provided with a background by the assistant CAO, Tony Dublino. After reviewing the proposals internally, they were distributed to agency personnel for their review and input to inform the ranking process. A meeting among County staff and representatives of BLM, CA DFW, US Dept. Fish and Wildlife and Eastern

Sierra Land Trust was held on January 24, 2018. During the meeting 12 topics were discussed and agency staff was questioned as to their opinions on the various approaches proposed by the different operators. The 3 proposals received were largely consistent with the discussion of best management practices on the 12 topics. Staff is recommending a draft 10-year lease with detailed Grazing Management Plan (GMP) that would include 9 conditions and limitations of management, on/off dates, animal units, interior/exterior fencing, water system, non grazing areas and willow habitat.

Once the GMP is drafted and CEQA analysis can begin, an initial study will be performed and additional studies may be needed with an associated cost to be borne by the applicant or the County which was not included in the 2017/18 budget for Conway and staff will receive Board direction regarding the CEQA. If you would like a copy of the letter, contact me at vlresort@wildblue.net **LOWER OWENS** is at **331.9 as of 4/26**. The flow should taper when DWP turns down the wheel.

ROCK CREEK LAKE road is open to the pack station. Some open water around inlet and outlet and ice fishing will be ok but watch for dark spots and be safe as it can change at that elevation very fast, but there's always the creek. Season opens April 28. **UPPER OWENS** – Flows are at **246.3 as of 4/26** above the Confluence. Water is pretty clear with a fair number of 10"-13" fish but cold water has put a damper on the action. Warm up this week should get the spawn going but the spring runs have been a mystery so far. Flies to try: Stimulator #16, Extended Body BWO #16, and High-Vis Parachute BWO #18. Nymphs: #12-16 Bead Head Prince Nymph, #16-18 Pheasant Tail, Flashback Hares Ear #14-16, Red Copper John #12-14, Western Coachmen #12-16, San Juan Worms #12, Egg patterns any size, Zebra Midge #18, Copper Tiger Midge, Marabou

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leeches, Woolly Buggers and Matukas stripped or dead drifted.

CROWLEY LAKE – Season opens April 28th, and is ice free with 15,000 pounds trout were stocked by Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) last fall, and hoards of anglers are expected. This will be the hot spot, most of the summer.

HOT CREEK - Water is clear and cold. Flows are at **72.2 as of 4/26**, but might increase this week with warmer weather. (Note: flows include water from the springs, not just the gauging station at the highway so this is what is really flowing through the canyon). Gate is open, and fishing is good. Seeing lots of midges early and BWOs mid days. With these warmer days Caddis should show up.

CONVICT LAKE – Ice free and heavily stocked. Again there are some nice tagged fish for the opening day derby by Desert Springs this Saturday, April 28th.

CRESTVIEW REST AREA – Opened April 5th, 2018

MAMMOTH LAKES BASIN is thawing, and the road has not been plowed. The basin is not accessible by stock trucks and will not be planted for the opener on April 28th. The Twins are open with but surrounded by snow.

SAN JOAQUIN – Road crews will start plowing around May 13th, as is the norm due to the agreement between the mountain and the Special Use Permit with Forest Service.

JUNE LOOP - The entire June Lake loop area lakes (June, Gull, Silver and Grant Lakes) are ice free and have been stocked in preparation for opening day. Grant Lake is rising steadily and has been accessible to stocking trucks the past few weeks and has been stocked. All marinas in the June Loop have boats in the water and are ready to go. Silver Lake and Oh Ridge Campgrounds are open. Rush Creek is flowing very strong and is above its bank in many areas.

The June Lake Marina will release 70 trophy trout from the stock pens.

LUNDY LAKE – Lake is ice free and work will start May 9th to ready the resort for opening in June but no exact date as yet. Back ponds are full and trees are starting to leaf. Lake was stocked. Lots of surface dimpling, so bugs are around and suggest bringing your light weight rod and some small dries for added fun when trout season opens Saturday, April 28.

VIRGINIA LAKES – The County road crew started plowing the road on the 30th of March and completed the road to Big Virginia on April 9th with both lanes clear. County requests to please observe the no parking signs along the road and/or in private driveways. The 7 hours of rain on the 5th removed all the snow on top the lakes down to surface ice so smooth you could have skated on it. There has been an abundance of small stoneflies, and midges around the snowpack but not enough water to throw fly line until more water is open. It's melting very fast with temperatures staying about in the low 40's at night and in the high 60's in the last 3 days but soon to change.

BRIDGEPORT RESERVOIR - Ice free and is full as of April 25th but may be lowered anticipating run-off. Mono County Tourism purchased 700 browns (spawners) late in 2016 from Desert Springs Hatchery in Oregon in the 1-pound range that might hit 3 pounds or more by opening weekend. Weather predictions are good with warm temps in the 60's plus and slight wind for Saturday's trout opener.

KEN'S SPORTING GOODS - Nevada Licenses Unfortunately Nevada does not have the new license terminal on-line, and Ken's will post it when it is up and running.

EAST WALKER – Report from Jim Reid. "The flow has bounced around from 134-188-195 this past week and currently running at **165cfs** as of 4/26. Even with the ups and downs flow-wise, the fishing has been excellent. There's lots of nymphing activity as well as streamer activity. We've also

had a few good reports on dry/dropper rigs lately. The traffic down there has been increasing with the great weather and fishing we've been having. Both the upper and lower sections on the California side are doing well as are both the Rosachi and Sceirine sections in Nevada. I'd expect the flows to start coming up a bit as the weather warms. Listed are the flies currently working: Rojo midge, San Juan worm, pheasant tail, prince nymph, flash bang midge, mercury midge, miracle nymph, zebra midge, flashback emerger, Brassie, Copper John, Top Secret Midge, Micro Mayfly, Poxyback Stone, Micro Stone, Sculpzilla, Matuka, Matuka Sculpin, Zuddler, Moal Leech, JJ Special, Stimulator, Chubby Chernobyl, rubber leg Stimulator, and Madam-X".

HONEYWELL POND - Conditions are great, the weeds haven't grown too much yet and the fish are in great shape! Give us a call if you want to break out the tube and hit up the pond! Call Ken's Sporting Goods in advance if you want to book some time out there.

SCEIRINE RANCH – The ranch fished excellent this week with great reports from anglers. Lots of flies working on the ranch so try red San Juan worms, pheasant tails, flashback pheasant tails, Poxyback Stones, Micro Stones, Rainbow Warriors, Split Cased BWO's etc. Don't forget to call Ken's Sporting Goods if you want to book some time on the ranch.

TIOGA PASS ~ Tioga Pass (from the Junction of US 395 to the Yosemite National Park Gate) crews have removed snow up to the Yosemite National Park gate. Rock and debris removal and repairs are in progress. Avalanche danger is high as well as rockfall. There is no estimated date for reopening the highway at this time.

SONORA PASS ~ Crews are in the process of removing snow. The snowpack is estimated to be 4 to 8

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feet on the highway. There is no estimated date for reopening the highway at this time. County is at the top and waiting for the other side to get there. **MONITOR PASS** is opened with no restrictions at this time.

KIRMAN LAKE - Jim Reid made a recon hike up to Kirman and the road/trail is totally clear of snow and the lake is very full. Not sure how the fishing will be up there this season, it was kind of a bust most of last year so hopefully it will be better. With any luck we'll get some reports after opening weekend that I can pass along.

WEST WALKER – was running at 1330cfs on April 8th and off color but is currently **818cfs as of 4/6** with good flat water just below the bridge for about one mile starting at the BRIDGE with a bit of rough water then flat water near Chris Flat campground. I drove along the river on

Tuesday with lots of people taking photos but not an angler in sight. The only reports Ken's had from the West is that it was slow, it might be a little too cold still but as the weather warms up it should start getting better. **NOTE:** Winter catch and release regulations change on April 28 to the Sierra District general regulations (5 fish limit/10 in possession).

MOST STREAMS that have an approved pre-stocking evaluation are flowing well and have been stocked for the season opener. This year there are lakes that have rarely been accessible this early in the season. For those with an adventurous spirit and strong legs, Kirman, Fremont, Lane and Roosevelt Lakes in the upper West Walker River are accessible as are Parker and Little Walker just north of the June Lake loop. For catch and release fishermen, Lower Parker, Lower Walker, Rush (below Grant

Lake) and hot Creek should provide good opportunity at this opener.

CalTrans Scheduled Road Maintenance

CalTrans received funding that will widen shoulders and add a northbound left turn pocket on US Highway 395 at the intersection of Virginia Lakes Road (Conway Summit). Construction is expected to begin in spring and is considered a "minor project". To check other construction for 2018 along US395 go to (www.dot.ca.gov/d9/projmgmt/projects.html)

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