

ON THE FLY

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
FLY FISHERS CLUB OF ORANGE COUNTY
OVER 50 YEARS OF SERVING OUR MEMBERS!



MAY 2024

Inside This Issue

As a continued reminder, the FFCOC has secured the Back Bay Conference Center as our host venue for the remainder of our 2024 Club Meetings. Come join us at the Back Bay Conference Center on May 8!

Casting In The Park Event Announced. May 11, 8:30 am, at Mason Regional Park in Irvine. All members are welcome! See Page 8.

Save the Date; Public Casting Clinic; Sep 7 at Mile Square Regional Park (Fountain Valley). See Page 9.

2024 Annual Auction Preview. Spectacular "2 for 1" Fishing Trips Offered. Page 11.

Check the website Events Calendar and join in the activities of **YOUR** Club!!

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www.ffcoc.org



President's Message

President's Message by Brian Mayer

Have you taken your gear out of the storage bags? Did you remember to clean it all after your last fishing outing? As you are preparing for this coming season, if you have gently used equipment, supplies, clothing that you no longer use, consider donating it for the Club Auction. If you have items to donate, make a list and bring the items to the monthly Club meetings. If you have items to donate, make a list and email Auction@ffcoc.org letting us know you are bringing them. Making a list of the items is the only way we can recognize your generous donations to our Club.



Mark Spowart and Alan Ross have done an excellent job in acquiring some exciting fishing trip deals for our auction. See the teaser ad and plan on bidding for these “bucket list” trips!

The Club will need volunteers for the Auction event. If you can give us a few hours of your time on September 11 to help with transportation, setup, functions during the Auction, or break down, please send an email to the Auction@ffcoc.org, or contact myself.

We are still looking for volunteers to join our Board of Directors. The future success of the Club requires clear succession planning for the Board members. New volunteers are always needed to learn and take over the various Board positions. All Board positions can generally use some assistance. Please look at the list of Board positions at the end of this newsletter. Our Club has immediate needs for Leadership, Membership Chairperson, Assistant Treasurer, and Treasurer positions. If you have an interest, contact the current Board member in the position or contact me.

May is the month that we remember and honor our Mothers. To all the mothers in our Club, I wish you a very happy Mother's Day. Without mothers like you, we would not have the great fishing Club that we enjoy !

Best regards,
Brian Mayer, 2024 President
president@ffcoc.org

FFCOC Meeting Venue for 2024

FFCOC 2024 Meeting Venue: Back Bay Conference Center (Irvine)



When: May 8, 2024

Standard Meeting Times:

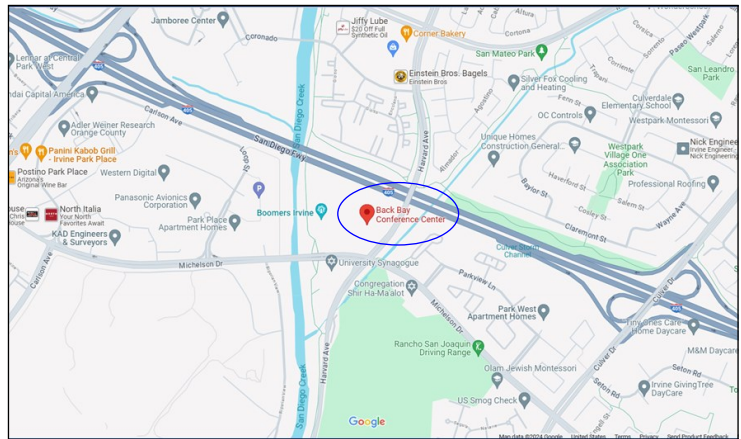
6:30 PM - Wet Fly Social Hour

7:30 PM - Speaker Presentation

9:00 PM - Meeting Concludes

Where: Back Bay Conference Center
3415 Michelson Drive
Irvine, CA 92612

Meeting Fee: **\$15**



The FFCOC has secured the Back Bay Conference Center as our host venue for the remainder of our Club General Meetings in 2024, this includes the Annual Club Auction on September 11.

- The Back Bay Conference Center will provide Appetizers and a Cash Bar for your Social Hour pleasures! Note that a meeting fee of **\$15/person** will be charged to help offset the cost of our venue with appetizer and beverage service.
- The Back Bay Conference Center is on the 2nd Floor; above the bowling alley. Look for the entrance shown in the photo above.
- Come and join us at the Back Bay Conference Center! Guests are always welcome!!



2024 Speakers

MONTHLY SPEAKER PROGRAM

January	Glenn Ueda	Planet Carp: Fly Fishing for The World's Most Popular Fish	01/10/24
February	Griff Marshall	Central Oregon and the Deschutes	02/07/24
March	Sandra Jacobson, Ph.D.	CalTrout Projects in the South Coast and Sierra Regions	03/13/24
April	Steph Albano	Fly Fishing Idaho	04/10/24
May	Matthias Hákonarson	Iceland - Trip of a Lifetime	05/08/24
June	Tim Flagler	Euro Nymphing Made Simple	06/12/24
July	Doug Rodricks	The Eastern Sierra - a Guide's Fresh Look	07/10/24
August	Club Picnic	William Mason Regional Park (Irvine)	08/17/24
September	Club Auction	Back Bay Conference Center (Irvine)	09/11/24
October	Simon Gawesworth	Fly Lines	10/09/24
November	Graham Day	Xcalak, Mexico	11/13/24
December	TBA	TBA	12/11/24

ICELAND – TRIP OF A LIFETIME

by Matthias “Matti” Hákonarson



You may have heard about how fantastic Iceland fly fishing is - a mecca for trout, salmon, sea trout, arctic char, and more. The health of the fisheries is incredible, and the scenery is simply mind-blowing. With that information comes a reputation for being too expensive for the average angler.

This month's presentation will explore fishing packages from exclusive to DIY, to turn your dream into reality. If you are a keen freshwater fly angler, Iceland needs to be at the top of your list. The size and numbers of the fish in its rivers and lakes are nothing short of amazing. Throw in the scenery, the local culture, and the feeling of being in one of the most special places in the world (nature-wise), and you really can't beat it. It is one of the last reliable salmon fishing destinations.

Matti Hákonarson, our May 8th presenter, formed Iceland Fishing Guide in 2009 to host anglers from around the world to come to Iceland and make use of the experience he has gained through his endless urge to explore new water in his home country. Born in 1981, **Matti hails from the picturesque town of Akureyri**. He is a skilled guide who devotes a significant amount of time to river expeditions each year, surpassing the average person's fishing days in a decade. With a great sense of humor and a love for fishing, this former hockey player continues to inspire and lead others on unforgettable outdoor adventures. His company has grown a lot over the years and is now the proud lease holder on various rivers and beats in Northern Iceland with Myrarkvisl at the top of the list. Bear in mind that the beats on Iceland's rivers are privately owned and leases must be arranged for river access.

Iceland Fishing Guide offers guided fishing tours to the premier lakes and rivers in Iceland. These work for beginners as well as experienced anglers, for individuals or groups. The guides are expert anglers and have extensive experience fishing in the area. They arrange the licenses needed for the fishing tour in advance and plan the tour itinerary.

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This Month's Speaker (Con't)

The season kicks off on April 1st with the emphasis on large brown trout in any of the five rivers leased by IFG. Leave the nymph rod at home as dries, skated flies, soft hackles and streamers are the order of the day. Later in the season the emphasis shifts to Atlantic salmon and several rivers offer the chance to fish these with traditional Spey technique. The long summer evenings allow late night sessions long after darkness has fallen on American rivers. The season ends in late September.

Iceland has much to offer the non-fishing spouse or travel companion. Horseback riding, hiking, volcanoes, thermal spas and of course the spectacular Northern Lights are but a few of the attractions.

Please mark your calendars to attend our May 8th meeting with Matti Hákonarson.

Websites:

<https://www.icelandfishingguide.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/icelandfishing.guide/?fref=ts>



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This Month's Speaker (Con't)



Club News

Membership

Please Welcome Our Newest Members!

March

Philip Delgado (Mission Viejo)
Les Krieger (Mission Viejo)
Patrick Spragge (Laguna Niguel)
Sunny Tatosian (Laguna Niguel)
Rob Geyer (Trabuco Canyon)

April

Greg Savage (Laguna Hills)
Nicholas Cicchetti (Costa Mesa)
Hutch Meltzer (Irvine)

Club Hats Are Now Available



New, available to Club Members only...Club hats! The hats are khaki colored, cotton twill, size adjustable, with an embroidered Club logo. The cost to members is only \$15 each. You can get yours at any one of our future Club meetings.

CASTING IN THE PARK

May 11th



The next Casting In The Park casting session is scheduled for Saturday May 11th from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. It will be held at Mason Regional Park in Irvine (18712 University Ave., at the corner of University and Culver). All Club members are encouraged to attend. There will be FFI Certified Casting Instructors available to work with beginning, as well as intermediate, and more advanced casters. You should bring rod, reel, line, leader, yarn to tie to the end of your leader (no flies or hooks), eye protection, hat, sunscreen, water, snacks, etc. Enter the Mason Park on University Ave. and after you pay the entrance fee proceed until the road tees and turn left. Follow the road until you reach either Parking Lot E or F. We will be set up closer to Lot F. Please register on-line so we have a headcount. Contact Doug Jones if you have questions. Hope to see you there.



Club News

FFCOC Annual Club Picnic

Mason Regional Park

The date and venue for our Annual Club Picnic is now set; **Saturday, August 17, 2024, 11:00 AM until 3:00 PM**, at William Mason Regional Park (Shelter 1) in Irvine. This is the same venue as we used last year; many positive comments were received regarding the use of the Mason Park Picnic Shelter. The Club does not hold a monthly meeting in August, so come and join us at the picnic. The cost is **FREE!!** There is a \$5 Entry Fee to the Park. Enjoy an afternoon of Food, Games, Prizes, Fun and Fellowship with your fellow Club Members. All members and their guests are invited! Volunteers will be needed to host the event; site setup, grill technicians (cooks), food station preps and setup, game execution, cleanup and site teardown, etc. Please look for a call for volunteers communique. Your suggestions for a great picnic event are welcome as well!!

Club Calendar Event: [FFCOC Annual Picnic - Club Calendar - Fly Fishers Club of Orange County](#)
Event Coordinator: Terry Roznos, taronos@verizon.net

Public Casting Clinic

Mile Square Regional Park

Save the Date! The date and venue for our Annual Casting Clinic is now set; Saturday, September 7, 2024, 8:00 AM until 1:00 PM, at Mile Square Regional Park (Shelter 3) in Fountain Valley. **Note:** This is a change in venue from last year as Mile Square Park allows casting on the pond, critical for roll cast instruction for our students. For additional information, visit the Club Calendar Event at the link provided below.

This is our Club main public outreach event to support and raise awareness of the sport of flyfishing! The public and Club members are welcome to join the event. The Casting Clinic concludes with a FREE BBQ for all participants and volunteers. Club Member volunteers will be needed to help with set up, running the event, cooking on the BBQ's and clean-up. Please look for a call for volunteers!

Club Calendar Event: [2024 Free Public Fly Casting Clinic](#)
Mile Square Park Map Download: [Mile Square Park Map \(ocparks.com\)](http://ocparks.com)
Event Coordinator: Ken Lindt, ken.lindt@gmail.com



Club News

Stream Keepers Wanted!



Are you interested in a fly-fishing trip – someplace you’ve gone before or maybe someplace you’ve always wanted to go?

A great way to meet people and hone your fly-fishing skills, and ultimately have fun is participating in a FFCOC fly fishing trip, and one of the ways of doing this is being a Stream Keeper.

Every trip sponsored by FFCOC, and included in the FFCOC Outings calendar, has a Stream Keeper whether it’s a multi-day trip or just a morning of fly-fishing at the surf.

Does this sound a bit too daunting? It’s not. The FFCOC has a procedure specifically for Stream Keepers in the Members Only section of the FFCOC website. Use the link below to view or download a copy. Contact your Outings Director, Mike Peters, and there are many former and current Stream Keepers that will answer any, and all questions. This is a great way to get involved in your Club, meet other Club members, and mostly enjoy fly-fishing!

[Streamkeeper Guidelines](#)

Newsletter

Newsletter inputs for the next (June) edition are due to the 2024 Editor by **Tuesday, May 28**, to meet publication deadlines. All submittals are gratefully accepted; Board Member announcements, Club News, Fish Tales, Fly of the Month, Outing Stream Keepers, or just general commentary from you (our readers)! Please send your inputs or suggestions to the 2024 Editor, Terry Roznos, at the email address provided. Thank you!! taronos@verizon.net

Club News

2024 Club Auction Preview

Spectacular “2 for 1” Fishing Trips Offered

At this year’s September 11 Auction, you will have the opportunity to bid on some of the best fly fishing “2 for 1” donations that FFCOC has ever been offered. THIS MEANS THAT THESE TRIPS ARE ESSENTIALLY DISCOUNTED BY 50%.

Auction bidding will be for the discount offer. Bidders will pay their winning bid amount to the Club and then receive the discount certificate for the “2 for 1” Price offer. Winners are responsible for making all reservations and payments to Lodges per the lodge policies.

Thanks to Mark Spowart and Alan Ross’s request efforts at the Denver Fly Fishing Convention this year, the following trips will be available:

1. Wildman Lodge - Alaska



This spectacular trip is offering a 7 day, Sat to Sat package that includes 3 days of fishing by jet boat and 3 fly out days. The price for this trip is normally \$10,400 per person. This “2 for 1” deal means that each person only pays \$5,200 plus transportation, license, etc. This package does include flights from Anchorage to the lodge. Normal lodge booking policies apply.

Check out their web site: <https://www.wildmanlodge.com>

2. Iceland Fishing Guide – Iceland (This is our May Club speaker!)



This is definitely a once in a lifetime trip to fish and see Iceland for 5-6 days available April and May 2025. You fly into Akureyri and go to the Myrarkvisi Lodge where you will fish 5 rivers. The price for this amazing trip is usually \$12,980 per person. This “2 for 1” deal means that each person pays \$6,450 for the Lodge and fishing experience.

Their website is: <https://www.icelandfishingguide.com>

YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/DvWpbhS3wvQ>

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Club News

3. ATA Lodge (Alaska Trophy Adventures) - Alaska



Here is another fabulous Alaska trip that offers either Salmon or trout fishing. The lodge is located on the Alagnak River. The regular cost is \$15,000 per person. The “2 for 1” deal means that you pay \$7,500 per person.

Take a look at their web site: <https://www.atalodge.com>

YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/E8ENc0rBYyA>

4. SET Fly Fishing - Argentina



This is another terrific and unique opportunity to fish Argentina at Spring Creek Lodge located in northern Patagonia. Most of your fishing will be on day or multi-day float trips. The cost of this adventure is normally \$12,800 per person. With this “2 for 1” deal, you pay \$6,400 per person.

Their website is: <https://setflyfishing.com/en/spring-creek-lodge>

YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/mYVfWOhsY-s>

Club News - Outing Report (San Juan River)

San Juan Outing Trip Report

San Juan River (Navajo Dam, NM)

April 14-17, 2024

The 2024 Club Outing to the San Juan River is now complete. There were 10 members participating this year. The Trip Report is in work and not yet available for the May Newsletter edition; you'll have to wait for the June addition! A few snapshots of the trip are included here for your viewing pleasure. Enjoy...



Club News - Fish Tales

San Juan River, New Mexico. March 2024

A Fish Tale by: Greg Kraft

I am new member Greg Kraft. You guys are going to have a great time on your trip this month to the San Juan River!



Wanted! Your Fish Tales!! See how simple it can be!!!

Have you been fishing lately?? Please share your story with our membership! Our readers enjoy reading about your fishing exploits!!

You don't always get to share your full stories at our monthly meetings. The Newsletter provides a great forum to share your stories!

Your tales don't need to be novels, or even short stories. A paragraph or two would suffice. Photos are great (as the old saying goes, "they are worth a thousand words")! Don't worry about the formatting or arranging. Just send what you've got! Your newsletter staff will handle the polishing!! Your Fish Tales are always greatly appreciated!

Please send your Fish Tale submittals to your 2024 Newsletter Editor, Terry Roznos at:

taroznos@verizon.net

Thank you!

2024 Club Outings

Date	Destination	Stream Keeper
March 10-12	Pyramid Lake (Nevada) Primary Guide: Joe Contaldi	Paul Nakamura
March 23-34	Mentor Outing - Lower Owens River	Doug Jones
April 14-17	San Juan River (New Mexico)	Brian Mayer
July 12-15	Hot Creek Ranch	Don Tayenaka
September 26-30	Bridgeport	Terry Roznos
October 7-11	Fly Fishing Southern Utah (Loa, Utah)	John Williams
October 18-20	President's Outing/Kern River	Brian Mayer

Note: Contact Mike Peters with your Club Outing proposal, or for guidance on creating a Club Outing. Let's fill up this Outing page, and let's go fishing as a group!!!

Stream Keeper Contact Info (email and phone numbers) may be found in the Club Directory on the FFCOC Website.

Trip Full

Trip Full

HOT CREEK RANCH 2024

July 12-15, 2024



The cost of this trip this year is **\$500** per person.

The trip is full at this time, if you would like to be put on a waitlist, contact Don Tayenaka, dontayenaka@me.com, or call 949-292-8325

Monies need to be to our Treasurer, Tom Sakai
Deposit **\$250**. Due **Jan. 15, 2024**. Balance due **June 1, 2024**

Send Check Made out to: FFCOC

P.O. Box 23005 Santa Ana, Ca. 92711-3005

Trip starts Hot Creek Ranch July 12, 2024

Check in time is **4:00 P.M.** Friday **NOT BEFORE!**

Trip ends July 15, 2024 you must be out of the cabin by **10:00 A.M.**

You may fish the remainder of the day.

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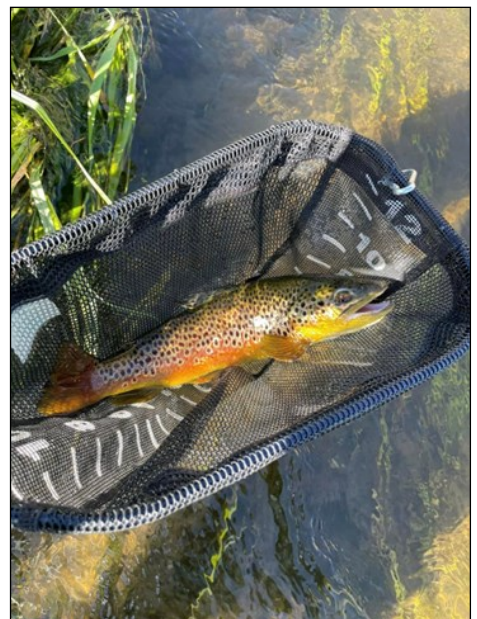
2024 Outings - Hot Creek Ranch

You must be a Club member to attend.

You will need a signed release form on file for this trip.

If you have previously attended a Club Outing, and your form is on file, you are set.

Check with our Membership Chairperson to see if it is on file. Thank you.



FFCOC Bridgeport Outing 2024

September 26 - 30



Dates: September 26-30. Arrive on a Thursday (9/26), and Depart on a Monday (9/30). Three full days of fishing the Bridgeport area (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday)! You may of course arrive/depart earlier or later as your schedule availability permits.

Waters: There are numerous great fishing opportunities in the area; including stream fishing the East Walker River, West Walker River, Virginia Creek, Buckeye Creek, Robinson Creek, and more. Stillwater fishing on Bridgeport Reservoir, Kirman Lake, Lundy Lake, the Upper or Lower Twin Lakes, or on the Virginia Lakes. Private waters are also available for a fee (Sceirine Ranch, Nevada). **Note:** Due to the 2023 rainfall and snowpack, the area reservoirs filled, flows on the creeks, streams and rivers were back in good shape last year, and the fishing was great! The Blue Ribbon East Walker River and its Miracle Mile fished "lights out"!!

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2024 Outings - Bridgeport (Con't)

Fishing: Independent fishing format. Members disperse to their desired fishing locations in the morning (as singles, or better yet, buddy up). Guided fishing is also available; Ken's Sporting Goods in Bridgeport has a list of recommended local guides for hire to put you on fish! Then after a day's fishing, the group will rendezvous at the evening campfire at our host Lodge to discuss the day's fishing, share a beverage or two, and discuss our plans and strategies for the next day.



Lodging: Willow Springs Resort ([Willow Springs Resort in Bridgeport, CA](#)), approximately 5 miles south of Bridgeport off Hwy 395, is our home base for the outing. Standard single rooms (queen bed), Kitchenette rooms (one queen and one double bed) for those who wish to buddy up and share a room/expenses, and 30A full hook-up RV sites are available for your lodging choices.



Standard Single Rooms are \$150/night. The Standard Room includes: One queen bed, Private Bathroom, Wi-Fi and Satellite TV, Heating and Air Conditioning, Mini refrigerator, Microwave, and Coffee maker.



Kitchenette Rooms are \$200/night. Kitchenette Rooms include: One queen bed, One double bed, Private Bathroom, Wi-Fi and Satellite TV, Heating and Air Conditioning, Coffee maker and Toaster, Microwave, Mini refrigerator, Stove top range, and Silverware/dinnerware/cookware.



RV sites are \$55/night. RV Sites have Full Hook Ups; 30A Electrical, Water, and Sewer connections. [This is the only FFCOC Outing that offers a RV lodging option! Come on you RVers, let's meet in Bridgeport!!](#)

Responsibilities: Outing attendees are responsible for transportation, lodging and meals. Convenient dining (breakfast, lunch or dinner) is available across the street at Virginia Creek Settlement (this is a gem of a restaurant), or in town. Based on attendee interest, an evening group BBQ can be arranged for Saturday evening. Traditionally, the group meets our final evening (Sunday) at the Virginia Creek Settlement for dinner. Most importantly, bring your favorite trout fishing gear!

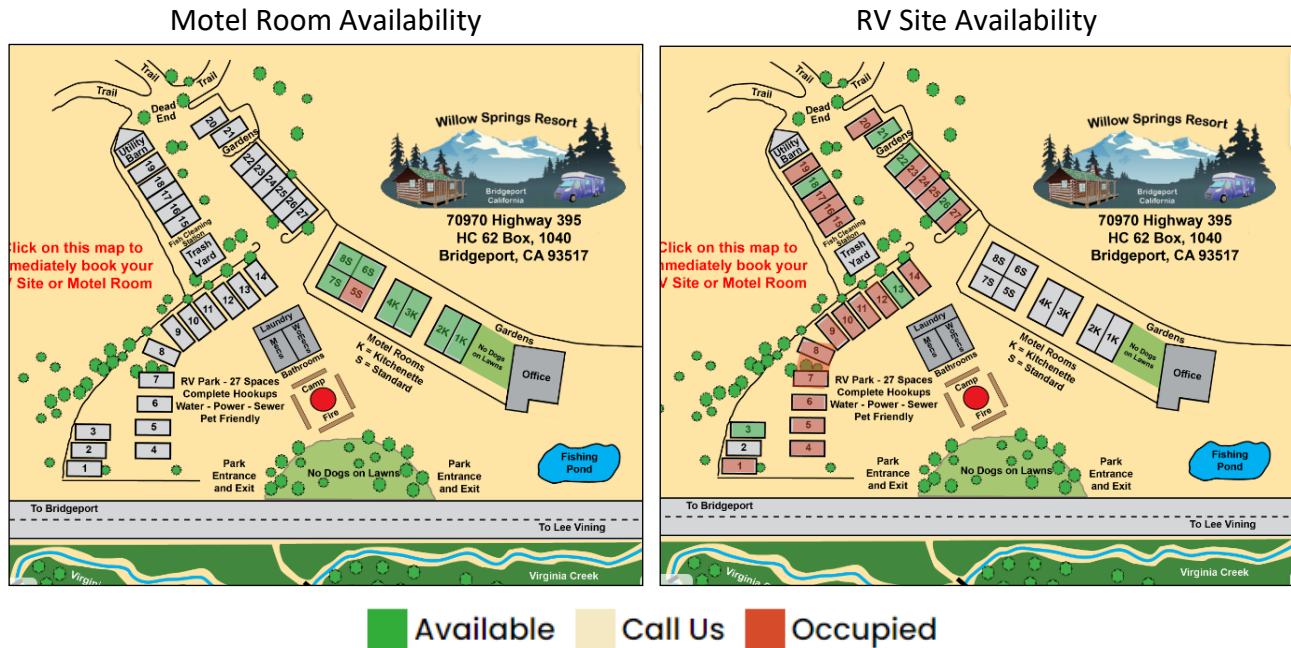
Registration Instructions: Attendees are responsible for making their own lodging reservations. Please make your lodging reservations and payment directly with Willow Springs Resort. You may make your lodging reservations using the Willow Springs website ([Willow Springs Resort](#)), or use the link provided on the Bridgeport Outing Calendar Event on the FFCOC website. Once you have secured a confirmed lodging reservation, then please click on the Register Now button on the Calendar Event to confirm your attendance.

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2024 Outings - Bridgeport (Con't)

Lodging availability status will be provided in each Club Newsletter. Book early, as rooms will likely fill as we get closer to the outing as Fall anglers and hunters will be booking these rooms.

Current Lodging Availability (Sep 26 - 30 stays):



Sounds like an Outing for you? Go ahead and book your lodging with Willow Springs Resort. Please contact your Stream Keeper with your questions. Note: Your Stream Keepers will be in RV Site #11.

Please Note: RV Sites are almost full! Motel rooms are currently wide open. Make your reservations directly with Willow Springs Resort to secure your lodging if you plan to attend. After you have secured a confirmed lodging reservation, then please click on the Register Now button on the Club Calendar Event, link below, to confirm your attendance. Or, simply send an email to your Stream Keeper and he can handle the on-line outing registration for you. This is the only mechanism to collect the planned attendees for this Outing!!

Confirm your planned Outing attendance here: [Bridgeport Outing 2024 - Club Calendar - FFCOC](#)

Thank you!!!

Stream Keeper Contact Info:

Terry Roznos
 (562) 322-4790 (cell)
taroznos@verizon.net

2024 Outings - Fly Fishing Southern Utah

Fly Fishing Southern Utah (Loa, UT)

Stream Keeper: John Williams, (951) 236-0862, thereeltroutbum@gmail.com

October 7-11, 2024

The Outing is FULL for 2024. John offers the following information to book your own outing to fish the waters of Southern Utah.

Productive waters are available to all who wish to fish it's waters. Every year we have an outing to Loa, Utah. It is available to you by yourself, or bring a few friends.

Mike James of the Quiet Flyfisher is available to you. His phone number is 435-616-2319.



There are other waters in Southern Utah, **Steve Dawson of Circle Valley Anglers** is also a good choice for other waters. He guides both Streams, Rivers and Lakes further south of Loa. He also has access to private waters. His phone number is 435-840-5617.

Southwest Council FFI – News & Events



New for 2023, *The Connection* is the official quarterly newsletter of FFI Women Connect. FFI Women Connect encourages female leadership in FFI Clubs

and the fly fishing industry by creating a platform where women can develop fly fishing skills, network with other women fly fishers, and come together for fly fishing experiences. FFI Women Connect is all about Friendship, Fun and Fishing!

What's New? This 5th issue of *The Connection* features fly fishing book reviews, events, previews of upcoming women's programs, trips and more.

Click to read the Spring 2024 Edition of *The Connection*:

[FFIWC Newsletter The Connection Spring 2024.pdf \(flyfishersinternational.org\)](https://flyfishersinternational.org/FFIWC_Newsletter_The_Connection_Spring_2024.pdf)

Editor Recommended Read: Consider a subscription to the Southwest Council monthly newsletter. It is very well done! You will read about news and events of the SWCFFI, as well as the Club activities for all 23 Fly Fishing Clubs in the Region (including the FFCOC). Your newsletter will arrive each month in your Inbox. Subscribe by clicking the link in the box below.

Subscribe to the SWCFFI Newsletter > Click Below

[Southwest Council Fly Fishers International \(list-manage.com\)](https://list-manage.com)





Victory: Southern Steelhead Protected Under California's Endangered Species Act!

The California Fish and Game Commission voted unanimously today (April 18) to list Southern California steelhead as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). This landmark decision provides critically important protections for this iconic species, which teeters on the brink of extinction.

Thank YOU for showing up for these fish! From signing our petition to providing a public comment in the meeting today to sharing and amplifying this action throughout your communities - your efforts to voice your support for these fish have been crucial for today's outcome. Thank you from all of us at CalTrout!

What are the benefits of this decision?

Listing Southern steelhead as endangered under California's Endangered Species Act will:

- Bolster federal protections for these fish provided under the federal ESA listing giving agencies more tools for protection - which these fish clearly need.

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Conservation, Fishing News, and Tips

- Promote actions to protect them including removing obsolete dams, improving habitat, securing instream flow, and restoring watersheds.
- Benefit human communities. For example, improving aging infrastructure will reduce the risk of flooding and increase public safety. Holistic watershed restoration will enforce and build strong relationships throughout the community. Ensuring our watersheds are hospitable to Southern steelhead indicates clean water which benefits all communities.

We look forward to working with our partners to implement the state's conservation plan for these iconic fish, including continuing our work in the South Coast region on behalf of Southern steelhead. Our current projects include removing fish passage barriers and expediting removal of obsolete dams on the Ventura River (Matilija Dam), Malibu Creek (Rindge Dam), Trabuco Creek, the Santa Margarita River, and more; removing non-native aquatic species that threaten prime steelhead habitat; and restoring watersheds.

Learn More About Our Work to Restore Southern Steelhead:

[South Coast Region | California Trout \(caltrout.org\)](https://caltrout.org/south-coast-region)

Conservation, Fishing News, and Tips

For your 2024 Eastern Sierra Fishing Adventure Planning; direct from the pages of *Western Outdoor News*, the 2024 month-by-month predictions for the 2024 Eastern Sierra Season. Enjoy the read...



KNEE DEEP: MONTH-BY-MONTH PREDICTIONS FOR THE 2024 EASTERN SIERRA SEASON

By: **MIKE STEVENS/WON Staff** -April 24, 2024

MAMMOTH LAKES - A year ago, *Western Outdoor News* published a month-by-month predictor of how the 2023 Eastern Sierra trout season would play out following the unprecedented madness brought on by the previous record-breaking winter. The absurd snowpack impacted every month of last season which made it a year like no other, and it's highly unlikely we see another one like that again. Barring a last-minute mega-blizzard, this season will be a welcome return to normal. Since it now seems like "normal" is something we haven't experienced for a while, here are the monthly predictions for 2024.



ROCK CREEK LAKE won't be open for the Opener, but it be long before it ices out. WON PHOTO BY MIKE STEVENS

MAY (includes end of April/Opener)

The region will be at full-power for the opener with all waters typically fishable on opening weekend open for business. This includes Crowley Lake, Convict Lake, the June Lake Loop and in Bridgeport, Twin Lakes and Bridgeport Reservoir. Intake II will be a shot spot in the Bishop area (that should come as no surprise) and Bishop Creek flows should be pretty optimal unless there's an unseasonal heatwave in the week leading up to the Opener resulting in a crazy-early start to spring runoff, but that will likely occur in mid-to-late May. All it takes is a few warm days in a row to get that party started, and fishing is usually tough while it's going on as it brings frigid water temps, high flows in the creeks and off-color water. The good news is, peak runoff doesn't last very long.

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Conservation, Fishing News, and Tips

South Lake near Bishop will probably still have ice on it on opening weekend, but there will be strong efforts to have rental boats in the water (at least at South Lake) by Memorial Day weekend. Forget about North Lake. Even if you could get up there, it will still be far from icing out.



CONVICT LAKE will be open for business on opening weekend. WON PHOTO BY MIKE STEVENS

The Mammoth Lakes Basin won't be open this early (but it's amazing when it is. Wait for the next barely-there winter as it can result in open water on Opening Day), but it usually is for the most part by Memorial Weekend.

Tioga Pass won't be open, but it opening up in the second half of May is possible because the Yosemite crowd would love full access as soon as possible. It's all depends on snowpack and road conditions.

In the wake of the opener, May is actually a pretty quiet month with light crowds as most visitors are saving their trips until after school gets out for summer. May is an incredibly underutilized month for Eastern Sierra anglers that should be considered by anyone who can pull off a road trip prior to the arrival of summer vacation.

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Conservation, Fishing News, and Tips



WON EDITOR Mike Stevens targeting brown trout on Convict Creek during peak runoff.

JUNE

Personally, this is my favorite month to fish the Sierra, and it should be everyone's favorite summer month if fishing is top priority. Stocking programs have been underway since before the opener, so there is no shortage of fish anywhere. Daytime temps are warm but not so hot to the point where mid-day fishing is challenging, and all "drive up" waters should be ice free. Keep an eye on higher-elevation like Virginia Lakes, North Lake and even Rock Creek Lake where the weather could keep ice in the equation into June.

Even if the weather is nice, the water will be cold so the play-in-the-water crowd won't be up yet, and take it from someone who has been up in July post 2020 and have had a flotilla of people on inflatable unicorns drift right over the spot he was fishing on the upper Owens River, they can be an issue.

The mad rush to the outdoors in 2020 created a ton of first-time Sierra visitors, and many of them are now annual visitors who shoot for July and August when the water is warm and the weather is exactly the same as at home.

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Conservation, Fishing News, and Tips

Conditions on trails leading to backcountry lakes vary on a case-by-case basis, but there's usually a good amount of hiking opportunities in June with only the upper reaches of trails still buried in snow.

JULY

Last year was probably the July to end all Julys for Sierra anglers since all the snow pushed everything at least a month back. So July of 2023 fished like a standard June and so on. All that high-country snow was still melting off keeping creeks running adequately and water temps in lakes cooler later than usual.

That being said, under normal or even near-normal circumstances, July is not a great month for hard-core Eastern Sierra trout anglers. The crowds will be in full force especially surrounding July 4 which means not only less room to fish, but way more people playing in the water and parking at drive-up lakes can be a nightmare. I'll never forget being up there in July of 2021 and seeing cars parked along both sides of the road throughout the Mammoth Lakes Basin. This was the same year the Mammoth Scenic Loop was so full of "boondock" campers, local officials had to launch a campaign to educate these newbies on how to avoid making a huge mess or starting a forest fire.

As for the fishing, water temps are rising and trout getting sluggish and heading deep. The best way to get after them is trolling with leadcore line or going deep with floating bait rigs with the cast-and-retrieve thing falling off quite a bit. It is kind of fun to be able to wet-wade in shorts and flip flops, and creeks can be a saving grace if there is still enough water moving through them to keep trout active.

If fishing is only a portion of your Eastern Sierra hit list, July is prime time for hiking, biking, inflatable unicorn riding and everything else, but serious anglers should look elsewhere on the calendar...

AUGUST

...as long as it's not August. It's just all the July factors only more so. There is another thing worth noting with regards to the July/August crowds: they are far from inescapable. If you're a backcountry angler, you'll run into plenty of traffic on the trails but very few of them are there to fish. So, while it might get a little noisier at times, you can still find yourself on a lake with no one else on it. Also, heading off the beaten trail (primary tourism areas) helps, too. I'm not saying charge into the backcountry and hide (unless you already do so), just head for fringe areas and smaller communities peppered all over the region between Bishop and Bridgeport.

If July or August is when you can go, by all means, do it. But if you have most of the season to choose from and trout fishing is at the top of your Eastern Sierra hit list, aim for earlier or later in the season. You're also doing the more touristy areas a service by doing your part to "level load" visitation across lighter occupancy times of year rather than piling in with everyone else. They're plenty busy when it's packed.

SEPTEMBER

Another great month despite the fact you never know what September you're going to get. It could be an extension of August, the early arrival of fall or a combination of both. One thing you can count

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Conservation, Fishing News, and Tips

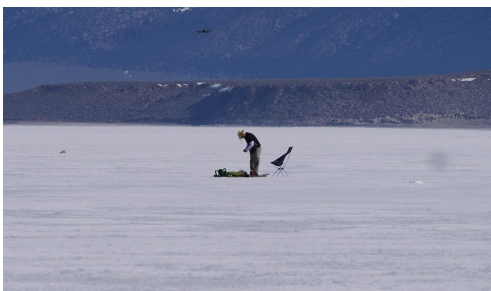
on is lighter crowds (back to school!), and trout stocking is still full speed for the most part. The idea of being prepared for any weather in the Sierra is a broken record, but it is true, especially in September. Even if daytime temps are warm, overnight lows will grow increasingly more chilly which will activate brown trout in particular. Overall, September is an outstanding month to fish the East Side.



HARD TO BEAT Crowley Lake in October. WON PHOTO BY MIKE STEVENS

OCTOBER

With October, it's less of a prediction thing because the previous winter has very little effect on the fishing at this point. About five years ago, an October trip has become part of my annual program. In that relatively-short time span, I've experienced a wide range of conditions ranging from freezing guides to all-day haze blown in from a wildfire to t-shirt weather. This is another month that can still be summerlike, but it falls off quick as fall takes hold. Some stocking has stopped for the season, but there are plenty of holdover trout to target and more importantly, wild fish really start perking up. Catch numbers can be significantly less than your summer trips, but you'll also notice an uptick in brown, brook, cutthroat and even wild rainbows becoming a bigger slice of the pie. Many of the trophy brown trout are caught between now and the end of the general season (November 15).



CROWLEY LAKE on last year's opening day. Thankfully there will be none of this. WON PHOTO BY MIKE STEVENS

The Spirit of Dame Berners

Go With the Flow

By Larry Behm



It's springtime and everyone is talking about flows. Why is the flow of rivers and streams so important to fishing?

Changing river flows influence both the fish and the angler. Flow tells you how much water is moving through the river. Entering a river at high flow can invite injury or death to the angler. Fish often take refuge from the torrent of high flow and hide where it is are hard to reach with a fly rig. Changing flows can change water temperature and what food is available and how the fish feed.

What is a good flow level for fishing?

That depends on the river. Each river has a different bottom shape and structure to hold the flowing water. For example, a man-made river, such as the Lower Owens, usually has a narrow channel for the flow. Thus, a small change in flow will cause a large change in depth and water speed. At the other end of the spectrum are large natural rivers, with broad flood plains, side channels, and attached wetlands. An example of this would be the Yellowstone River in the Paradise Valley area. When its flow increases, there is lots of room for the water to spread out and the fishing doesn't change much.

How do these different river types compare? A river such as the Lower Owens becomes difficult and dangerous above 250 cfs. Good fishing is in the high 100s to low 200s range. Compare that to the Yellowstone River that is wadable with good fishing up to about 6,000 cfs and fish would probably be dying if the flow drops below 1,000 cfs. But, during spring runoff the Yellowstone often flows at a dangerous 15,000 cfs. It all depends on the shape of the river bottom.

The flow also can influence the temperature of the water. If a lot of snow is melting to raise the river, the temperature of the water often drops. If the increased flow is from seasonal rains and the rain dilutes ground water feed, the temperature may rise. Its effects vary depending on the season and environment.

Consider flow from a fish's perspective. High flow increases the speed of water in the river. The fish is forced to stay near the bottom or the edges to avoid wasting excess energy fighting the current. The current speed in every river is close to zero at the bottom and is fastest at the surface. High flows usually muddy the water, so it is harder for the fish to see food. The fish reacts in one of two ways to these conditions. Either it hunkers down, saves energy and only eat what comes right across its nose. Or it waits until a very large piece of meat swims by that is worth the calories to chase.

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Fly Fishing Educational Series

The effects of flow on the fish's food are varied. Some insects wait for calmer waters to hatch, while others use the current to redistribute in the water shed. Small fish and crustaceans try to hide from the current but may be dislodged and thrown right into the fish's feeding zone.

How do we measure Flow?

The flow of a river is measured by estimating the volume of water that flows past a point in a given amount of time. In the US, this is generally measured as cubic feet per second (CFS). The US Geological Survey (USGS) keeps track of most rivers at several locations along their paths to enable predictions for flooding, hydroelectric or irrigation demands. The actual measurement that is collected by USGS is the depth of the river. The USGS has charted the river bottom at each location and created a calculation to convert the measured depth into flow. This is important to understand; because when you look at the USGS data site the flow will often be stated in feet/inches. You may need to find the CFS chart to understand the flow.

Why does flow change?

There are natural forces and human decisions that change the flow of rivers. If you are fishing downstream of a dam, the flows are controlled by humans and often predictable. You can usually find a prediction of the flows for the next day or so. The nature of the flow changes depends on the dam's purpose. If the dam is primarily to generate power, flows will change during the day as electricity demands change. Flows for these dams also change over the seasons to reflect increase demand for A/C in the summer. Dams focused on irrigation will generally change flows slowly and see the largest changes on a seasonal basis as the crops demand. Of course, flood control decisions are ad hoc and trump any irrigation and power plans.

Flow also changes from natural forces. Especially on undammed, natural rivers the flow is determined by the amount of rain or snow entering the drainage. Temperature changes in the mountains will influence the flow in the valley. If the snow is melting from the normal seasonal increase in spring temperatures, the flow will increase steadily and slowly. If the snow is coming down because of a rainstorm, flows will jump dramatically. The period of highest flow on mountainous natural rivers usually happens in the spring and is called "runoff season." This used to last about a month and was reasonably predictable. Unfortunately, climate change seems to be bringing precipitation more as rain and less as snow recently. Thus, runoff is happening earlier in the season, can last longer and is not so uniform. Be sure to check local conditions.

How do you find and use flow information?

Look at local fishing reports for flow levels and ask the local fly shop what a good level is for your target river. There are several online resources. The primary source for over 13,000 sensor sites is the website "USGS – National Water Dashboard" at:

<https://dashboard.waterdata.usgs.gov/app/nwd/en/?region=lower48&aoi=default>

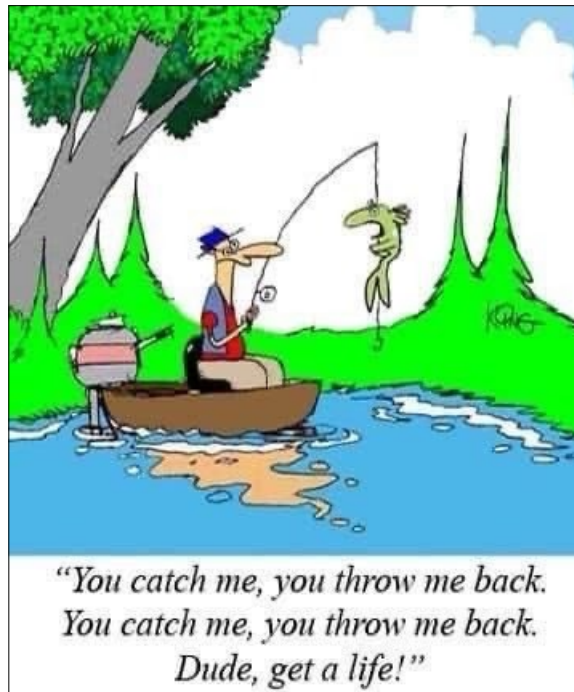
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Fly Fishing Educational Series

This site has so much information it can be difficult to use. I find that typing the name of a river into the search bar at the top is best. Once you find the page you want, bookmark it. When you reach the page for the sensor of interest you will see historical and live data displayed. Some sensors are simple with only gauge height while others measure much more. There are several phone apps that try to make these data more accessible such as Stream Map, Rivercast, or Trout Route. Some rivers are controlled by local authorities and do not drain into public watersheds, you will need to find the governing agency for their flow data. An example of that is the Lower Owens, which is owned by LA DWP and their website is: <https://wsoweb.ladwp.com/Aqueduct/realtime/lvrealtime.htm>

If you are planning a trip to a new river, the local guide shops will usually publish flow information in their fishing reports. Many of these will provide a link to the most relevant sensor for the river so you can keep track of changes as your trip approaches. The Orvis site provides a nice report for most of the famous rivers. Of course, a good search engine will also find sensors on your river.

As you learn the details of your favorite rivers, you will learn how to adjust your fishing trips, technique and rig to accommodate the current flow regime. So, flow is one more piece of the puzzle we call fly fishing. Keeping track of it will improve your safety and hookup rate.



Flies That Keep On Giving!

Editor Note: It's not very often you'll see a repeated fly in your newsletter, but this one has a story. We just returned from the San Juan River outing, home of the San Juan worm. We had a few of these (and variations) tied up in our arsenal and they worked very, very well when we fished on our own. The Squirmy Egg appeared in your June 2023 edition, and it may be included in the next Beginning Fly Tying Class curriculum. Thank you, John...

Squirmy Egg

By John Williams

I had the guide roll his eyes when I pulled out this from my fly box. This guide felt his flies were they only ones that could catch fish on the Big Horn River in Montana. First cast and we were off to the races. Then the guide wanted to see this one, it was my pleasure to give him a couple.



Materials:

Hook: Nymph # 10
Bead: 3/16 Brass
Thread: Fire Orange 6/0
Body: Squirmy Worm material, Lime Green
Or, Tentacle cut from a kids Crush Ball
Egg: Egg Yarn, Pink
Glue: Super Glue Gel Formula

Instructions:

1. Start your thread behind the bead and with many wraps secure the bead, then run the threads rearward to the mid point.
2. Cut a piece of tail material and let it extend 1 1/2 the length of the hook and secure it with several wraps of thread at the mid point of the hook.
3. Cut three 3/4" pieces of eggs yarn
4. Flatten your thread by rotating your bobbin counter clock wise. Split your thread, wax your thread, place the flattened yarn between the thread half. Spin your bobbin clockwise to trap the egg yarn.
5. Wrap the trapped yarn around the section between the mid point and the bead.
6. Smear your thread with a slight amount of super glue and whip finish.

I have stripped this fly and had great success, but also nymphed it along the bottom of a stream which worked well.

All The Best, John

FFCOC Leadership

Mission:

Encourage Angling with Artificial Flies (Fly Fishing)

Encourage Education and Fisheries Conservation, including Habitat and Watershed Conservation

Disseminate to the public the Results of the Club's Efforts

Encourage Youth to Follow Sound Conservation Practices

To **ACHIEVE** this the Club conducts various meetings, events and outings as documented in this newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP is open to all. If interested, contact one of the Board members or come to one of the Club meetings.

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