



# CFFU NEWSLETTER

“Dedicated to Education,  
Conservation and the Art of Fly  
Fishing” Established 1962.

December 2019

## Monthly Newsletter

**Mary Ellen Mueller, Editor**

### January General Meeting Jan 7

The January CFFU General Meeting Presentation will be by James Haufler who will talk about ongoing projects to restore and monitor progress in the Auburn Ravine.

### International Sportsmen's Exposition

CFFU will be back at the annual International Sportsmen's Exposition (ISE) event at Cal Expo in Sacramento. Dates for the upcoming show: January 16-19, 2020 (Thursday through Sunday). Rich Wilson is the contact person and has the schedules made out for the CFFU booth [e-mail: wilsonre7@yahoo.com phone (916) 364-7545]. Hope to see you there!

### Christmas Get Together at Keine's.

Our Tech Thursday holiday party was hosted by Keine's and Tim Au-Young. Good food and fun gifts were exchanged. Thanks to Tim and Keine's for hosting.

### Mentors Outing at High Hill

### Rich Kendall Reports:

I would like to thank all who came out on Saturday for the Outing December 14. We

avoided the rain but did have some wind and cold air to deal with. All our new members were eager to learn about fly fishing and the area we have around us to be able to go fish. Thanks to Indru, Victoria and Roberto for a fun day. Our mentor showing was really strong with Trevor (Cool custom-made long handle net) Segelke who lead our casting. Bill (I will cast this fly across the pond) Conway with tutoring as well. We had lots of help from Laurie (I love my new rod) Banks and Ken (I lost count of the number of fish to the net today) Davis. Another member showing up for support was Craig (Fish on First cast) McCullough.

Again thanks to all who came out. If you can, get out before the heavy winter sets in. High Hill is an option that is less than 1 hour away. Shout out to Glenn Yee for cultivating a great relationship over the years with management of High Hill for CFFU.



## Recent Events

Our own Laurie Banks was featured on the Orvis facebook page for having been the first woman to achieve Expert Level in the Western Native Trout Challenge. Here is an introduction to the article by Laurie. The interview follows.

*Since Orvis featured me on their Facebook page, I have received many supportive comments and I thank you all very much. I was quite thrilled that Orvis awarded me a Helios 3 fly rod for being the first woman to achieve the Expert Level of the Western Native Trout Challenge. I am honored that I received all the positive accolades, but be sure to congratulate Ken too as we accomplished this level together. We make quite a team and have enjoyed chasing native trout across the western states. If our presentation at the December General Meeting inspired anyone to take the WNTC don't hesitate to contact me. I would be glad to share any information we have that will help you on your quest.*

*Laurie*

*p.s. I haven't let him touch my new Helios yet.*

Here is her interview with Orvis.

1. How long have you been fly fishing, and how did you get started?

I have been fly fishing for about 15 years. The love of my life, Ken Davis, is an aquatic biologist and fly fisher. When we were first dating, I would travel with him as he spoke to fly-fishing clubs. When we went to Montana to visit his relatives, I would watch them fly

fish and I thought it looked like fun. Ken tried to teach me to cast but I would either end up mad at him or in tears. He encouraged me to join the local fly-fishing club, California Fly Fishers Unlimited (CFFU), so someone else could teach me.

2. What made you want to do the Western Native Trout Challenge?

In 2014 I was elected President of CFFU, a 400-member fly fishing club. During my two-year term the president-elect was Dave Lentz, who was the leader of the CDFW heritage trout program. He was a huge influence in getting dozens of our members motivated to try the California Heritage Trout Challenge. I completed that and found it was so much fun to have goals to achieve. I had seen a variety of fish, but never the beautiful California Golden, Little Kern Golden, Lahontan and Coastal Cutthroats, Goose Lake and Warner Redbands. I fell in love with small stream fishing for these tiny jewels. When Dave told our club members about the Western Native Trout Challenge, I knew that was my next quest. I love that 23 of the 25-dollar registration fee goes for improving native fish habitat.



3. How did you plan your trips to catch the most species?

We had reservations for fishing in Alaska in early June. I knew we could get several of the fish on the challenge list there. Besides fishing for Salmon, we targeted and caught Arctic Char, Grayling and Alaskan Rainbow. Because we had caught fish for the CA Heritage Trout Challenge in 2016, we knew where to find them. In late June we traveled to the Kern Plateau and caught the California Golden, Little Kern Golden and Kern River Rainbow. Now we had the six species needed for the first level, but only two states.

In July, we planned to go to Las Vegas to visit our daughter and grandkids. I casually mentioned to Ken that the location of the Apache trout in Arizona was only a six-hour drive from Vegas, and the New Mexican Gila trout were just over the Arizona border. He was all for it, so I started planning. The fish maps on the WNTC website are great. We knew what creeks we needed to target. We used our Garmin Explorer inReach and found access points for the creeks. I used a paper map and found a strategic town in Arizona to use for a homebase and made hotel reservations. We bought our licenses online. I had no idea how to identify the fish, so I printed pictures of the Apache and Gila from the WNTC website. We were successful getting both so now we had eight fish from four states and completed the Expert level.

In early September, we planned to visit our other daughter and grandkids in Idaho, then go to Montana to visit Ken's sister and brother-in-law. Since we had to drive through Nevada to get there I started planning. We caught the Lahontan Cutthroat and Redband

in Northeast Nevada. Our daughter and her family love to spin fish so we chased Redband and Bull trout in Idaho with them. After a quick lesson both our 6- and 8-year-old grandsons caught their first trout on a fly rod. We got our Redband, but the Bull trout eluded us in both states. Next, we drove to Butte, Montana. Ken's brother-in-law was recovering from neck surgery. To get him out of the house we all went for a ride to a nearby pond that was included on the Challenge map. It was a delightful change from bushwhacking to get to streams and we caught our Westslope Cutthroat. We now had three more species and three more states. Just one more state to reach the Advanced level. Our friend Nick had given us information about the Wyoming Cutt-Slam, so we decided to drive home through western Wyoming. Using his information and the WNTC website we found and were successful catching the Bonneville Cutthroat. Just two weeks ago I braved 16-degree weather to catch my Eagle Lake Rainbow. I now have thirteen species in eight states and have completed the Advanced level. I can't send in the documentation until next year as the WNTC only accepts one level per year.

4. What was your favorite experience of the Challenge?

It's hard to pick just one. I love new experiences. By pursuing the WNTC we saw new terrain, streams, towns and beautiful native fish species. On the long drives through some stunning country I enjoyed the hours Ken and I spent collaborating. We'd discuss what worked and what didn't, flies,

techniques, and the state of the creeks. We are better fly fishers from participating in this challenge.

It was joyful to combine family and fishing. My grandsons Bo and Colt were thrilled to catch fish on a fly rod. I bought each of them a small fly box on a lanyard and let them pick out flies. They wore them around their necks all day. We introduced them to the catch -and -release concept. It's a great feeling to pass on my passion to future generations. Someday someone will ask them, "How did you start fly fishing?" and they'll answer," My grandma taught us."



you may be disappointed and frustrated. If you have planned your trip to include tourism and other events you will still have wonderful memories.

Some of these fish are so small they slip through a standard net. I carried a small-holed net. We fished mostly dry flies: red and black ants, hoppers, and Elk Hair Caddis. Fish readily accepted these flies. Except the Gila. Nothing natural appealed to these fish, but a lime green Trude did. Go figure! So, when the fish aren't accepting your naturals try your attractors. Many of our fish were caught at dusk. By the time we got back to the hotel, restaurants in small towns were closed. We packed lots of food. It's amazing how good Ramen Noodle soup is after a cold rainy day of fishing.



##### 5. What advice would you give someone just starting out on the Challenge?

This challenge takes a lot of planning. Be sure you check the WNTC website. For example, Arizona Apache trout must be caught in one of three creeks. Montana only accepts fish caught in stocked ponds and lakes. If you drive a long distance and don't get your fish,

Many fish are only caught at high elevations. Pace yourself until you are acclimatized. Don't trust the weather report! Be prepared for heat, cold and unexpected rain. Remember to bring a wading staff. I didn't need it for crossing these small streams, but many of the banks were overgrown and unstable with

hidden rocks and deep holes. The rain had made many of the dirt roads worrisome. Even though we have an all-wheel-drive SUV we found ourselves leaving the car to hike on slippery steep paths. I carried a small emergency kit in my vest: a signal mirror, bandages, waterproof matches, a space blanket, whistle, knife and cordage.

I kept a daily journal chock full of information. Pictures downloaded from your camera/phone are listed by date. The journal made it easier at the end of a long trip to match up the fish photos with locations.

This has been a great adventure. I never would have thought to visit some of these incredible places or see the variety of fish without participating in the challenge. I want to thank the WNTI and Orvis for including categories for women and youth. My father was a fly fisherman and took my brother fishing with him. I was to stay home and help my mother cook the fish. I think many women of my generation had similar experiences. I love seeing more and more women on the water. Of our 400 members, CFFU has over 70 enthusiastic female anglers. We are not 50/50 yet but headed in the right direction.

Thank you, Orvis, for the fantastic donation. I'll be using my new Helios 3 rod next year when I chase trout across the last four western states: Oregon, Washington, Utah and Colorado.

Laurie Banks

[laurie@creekchick.com](mailto:laurie@creekchick.com)

**Congratulations Laurie (and Ken)!**

## **Conservation: A Perspective For A Fly Fishing Club**

**By Keith Pfeifer**

We all have personal reasons for joining a fly fishing club. Most of us joined CFFU to either learn how to fly fish or improve our skills in fly-fishing. Many members wanted to find someone to fish with or learn about different places to fish. In other words, we joined CFFU because it is a fly fishing club, and we wanted to fly fish. It is unlikely that most of us thought very much about fisheries conservation as a primary reason for joining CFFU. Nonetheless, as you attend meetings, listen to speakers or read our newsletter, you become aware of environmental issues that have a direct impact on your recreational fly fishing. Climate change, drought, invasive species, mining, logging, dredging, dams, water diversions, water and habitat quality, and poaching are just a sampling of potential problems that our native and hatchery species face today. Many of these issues seem so complex and involve so many organizations and government agencies that any people who fly fish simply decide to let someone else solve these problems, mainly because they don't think their involvement will make a difference. Believe me, your participation in fisheries conservation *will* make a difference.

CFFU is committed to protection of fish and their habitats. In my first year as your Conservation Director, our then-President Laurie Banks, had established a Conservation Committee on which I served as Chairman. Other members were Carl Lang, Jim Berdan, Ken Davis, Dave Lentz and Bill Templin. The Mission Statement for this Committee

stated (and still does): “The overall mission of the Conservation Committee is to promote and support CFFU goals of conservation, preservation, and enhancement of California’s fisheries, aquatic resources and the watersheds that sustain them.” Furthermore, the front page of the CFFU website states that “CFFU is dedicated to promoting awareness and participation in the art of fly fishing and promoting the conservation, preservation and enhancement of our fisheries resources.”

So what exactly is “conservation as it relates to fisheries? A common general definition could be: “The preservation, protection, and/or restoration of the natural environment, natural ecosystems, vegetation and wildlife.” With respect to “fisheries conservation” my own definition would be: Fisheries conservation is the preservation of the species by protecting fish and maintaining their habitat (i.e. ecosystem) to insure reproductive success.” All of the environmental issues listed above are relevant concerns and should be addressed to insure survival of our fisheries.

As a member of CFFU, what is your role to help maintain or State’s fisheries and insure the future of fly fishing for future generations? There are several levels of conservation participation.

Passive: The contribution of money to organizations such as Cal Trout, Trout Unlimited and many others.

Slightly Active: There are activities that most of us already do, such as practicing good catch and release techniques, using non-toxic weights, picking up monofilament line,

cleaning gear to avoid transferring invasive species and avoiding spawning redds while wading.

More Active: Participating in river cleanups, habitat restoration projects, reading published or web articles on conservation issues related to fisheries and the environment.

Very Active: Attending meetings of conservation groups, government regulatory agencies and special interest groups to become knowledgeable about issues and policies affecting fisheries. Also, writing letters and e-mails, making phone calls to your governmental representatives to voice your opinion on conservation topics and current legislation affecting fisheries.

Unfortunately, political agendas have become part of the conservation discussion for many current fisheries issues. I understand that some of our CFFU members feel uncomfortable becoming involved in the politics of regulatory topics that appear unrelated to the sport of fly fishing. My perspective on this issue is pretty straightforward. Without sufficient clean water and adequate habitat for our fish species to thrive, many of our current ecosystems such as the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta will no longer support the diverse populations of resident and migratory sport fish.

As the largest fly fishing club in Northern California, we can have a positive impact on the environmental decisions being made that will affect our fisheries for many future years. As your conservation representative, I will do my best to keep you informed about important environmental/conservation projects, topics and issues related to our fisheries and fly

fishing. And as a fish biologist I always base my perspective on what is best for the fish and their habitat.

As the iconic wildlife scientist and conservationist Aldo Leopold once said “We abuse the land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.” In other words, the environment is not some abstract place or thing. It is everything you have been and everything you will be. You are a significant member of the environment. \*Keith stepped down as Director beginning in 2020 but remains on the Conservation Committee.

### Thanks to Dick's Taxidermy



Tim Au-Young presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Dick's Taxidermy. With Tim was Charlie who ended up getting a deer hair skin which he cut up and offered to CFFU members with all the proceeds going towards the Fish Derby Fund, wow. Thank you so much to Dick's Taxidermy and Charlie!

### Fly of the Month Returns!!

#### The Mack's Canyon by Robert Bettati

#### Recipe

- Thread:** black
- Tail:** orange over white calf tail
- Body:** 30% wool yarn at the rear and black wool yarn in front
- Rib:** silver tinsel
- Hackle:** black schlappen
- Over Wing:** orange over white calf tail



1. Pinch the barb, place the hook in the vice, start the thread and wrap to between the barb and the point of the hook.



2. Tie in the white calf tail (under part of the tail) then tie in the orange (top of the tail).



3. Tie in a length of silver tinsel. Now tie in the orange wool yarn and wrap about 1/3 of the remaining shank length.



4. Tie in the black wool yarn and wrap forward far enough to leave room for the hackle over wing and head.



5. Now counter wrap the tinsel forward and tie off.



6. Tie in the schlappen.



7. Tie in the white under wing.



8. Tie in the orange upper wing. Tie in a tapered head and done!

The Mack's Canyon was said to be developed by Doug Stewart for the lower Deschutes in the early 1970s. It is also referred to as the Max Canyon.



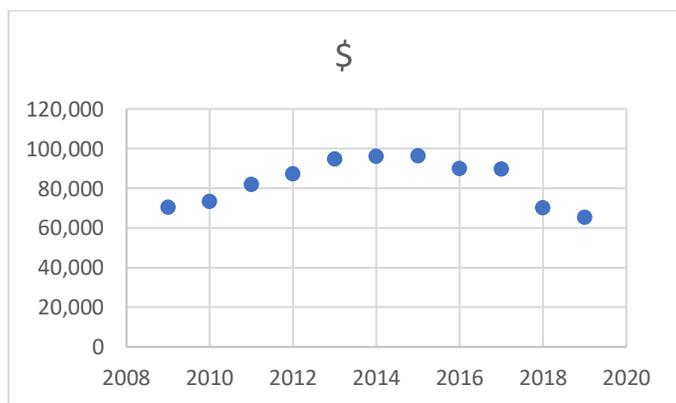
### Financial Overview of CFFU Finances from 2009 through 2019

Below I have illustrated the club's opening and closing balances for the years 2009 through 2019. As illustrated, the years 2009-2017 show an increase in our earnings which is followed by decreases in years 2017-2019. The table shows the beginning and ending bank balances by year. In the early years, our balances increased largely because of high interest paid on our CD accounts. In addition, the Annual Dinners were well attended and earned significant sums

Year	Beginning Balance \$	Ending Balance \$	Difference \$
2009		70,523	
2010	73,233	81,875	2,710
2011	81,875	87,219	5,344
2012	87,219	94,807	7,588
2013	94,807	96,159	1,352
2014	96,159	96,300	141
2015	96,300	90,937	-5,363
2016	90,937	89,610	-1,326
2017	89,610	70,162	-19,449
2018	70,162	65,157	-5,005
2019	65,157		

Starting in about 2016, the club began spending more money and bringing in less. This was before my time in the club but some long term members of the board

mentioned that there was a concern about a non-profit holding such large balances and that it might bring attention from the IRS. We have since found out that this is not an issue. The Club also began providing grants toward conservation projects as well as increasing the number of services to members such as the fly fishing 101 classes. In 2017 we awarded a \$5000 grant to fund a project working to identify and monitor fish populations in the Kern River drainage (conducted by California Department of Fish and Wildlife). Because of poor weather the researchers were not able to get to the study sites so the grant was deferred to the following year. Subsequently in 2018 we awarded three grants: the one from 2017 and two new ones for 2018. That was a contributing factor to the large decrease seen in 2018.



However, this past year the Board has endeavored to dramatically cut costs and try to find a reasonable amount that the club should spend that would not put us on an

indefinite negative trajectory. From the large negative difference of 2018 we have reduced our deficit to \$5005 this year. We did not award any grants this year (we did continue with the Bittner Scholarship), and cut the budgets of most programs. We did not cut any services that we provide to our members. Also, we did not have the Annual Dinner which is our main fund raiser. In addition, our general costs continued to increase. These included the cost of renting the Conzelmann Center, storage locker rentals, featured speakers, church rental and the cost of participating in the International Sportsman’s Expo.

The Board recognizes that we must find a reasonable budget that will allow the club to continue in perpetuity. The Board will continue to seek a comfortable balance between money spent and money earned while still honoring our commitments. This means that we must increase our earnings to make for a stable long term prognosis.

*How can we do that?* By raising prices on some things we provide such as membership dues, packets of information we give to class participants, recruiting more members and **strong support for our monthly raffles and for our main source of income, the Annual Dinner.**

*Submitted by: Mary Ellen Mueller (outgoing President) with extensive help from Jim Berdan, Treasurer.*

Here are some great photos from the **Liars and Tyers** party hosted by Gary Howard. A great time was had by all and I am sure there was no shortage of tall tales!



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