

June 2022

Headwaters

NEWSLETTER OF THE
STANISLAUS FLY FISHERS

President's Message

Summer's here and the fishing is blowing up everywhere! Time to hit your favorite water or species or location or any combination of the above.

I had the opportunity to fish Fall River in the early part of May. I fished with the fly fishers from the fishing club at Del Webb, Lincoln. A great bunch to fish with, but the trip was a little early in the season. We had rain, snow, wind and colder temps throughout the day than we wished for. Dale, my fishing buddy, and I hit it hard and managed a fair number of feisty rainbows to 20 inches despite the inclement weather. Rainbow trout are spring spawning fish and the Fall River fish migrate above the reach of fishable water on the Fall to spawn. Therefore there just weren't the numbers of fish in the river as there probably are now.

Vivian and I are heading to the Fall the week after next and should see the river full of fish and the Hexagenia should be happening. We have booked a guide for one evening while we are there to check out the Hex hatch. That takes place a fair boat ride below the Circle 7 Ranch where we are staying, and the guides don't get you back until after dark, and I'm not brave enough to boat after dark. I highly recommend getting out on the Fall River for a couple of days of fishing. It is an amazing fishery and if you go try to stay at the Circle 7. The houses are right on the bank of the river and have docks with boats right below the house. Get up, grab a rod or two, walk down to the dock, jump in a boat and go fish. How great is that?!

I'll report on our luck in the next newsletter.

The club recently hosted Sisters on the Fly for a how to weekend. See Mike's report for details. Gus Link is looking for volunteer's to assist with the Boy Scouts. Read about it below and consider volunteering. It looks like a lot of fun.

There will be a club meeting at Round Table Pizza on Pelandale in the SaveMart Center on June 14th at 6:00 pm. Come on by and share fishing stories and find out about secret spots and killer flies for those spots. All secrets will be revealed. Until then, get out and fish, it is high time!

Tight Lines!

~ Jim

Stanislaus
Fly Fishers

A CHARTER
CLUB OF FLY
FISHERS
INTERNATIONAL

MEMBER OF THE
NORTHERN
CALIFORNIA
COUNCIL OF FLY
FISHERS
INTERNATIONAL

Board Meeting

Tuesday, 6/14/2022
6:00 pm
Round Table Pizza
Pelandale Ave.
Modesto, CA
(Save Mart Center)

Stanislaus Fly Fishers Membership Information

Membership dues are \$40 per year for members.

Members must also join Fly Fishers International. Dues for the IFF vary, but do not exceed \$35 for a single, one-year membership.



Like us on Facebook 

We're on the Web!



Club News

Call for Volunteers FLY FISHING MERIT BADGE PROGRAM AT WENTE SCOUT RESERVATION

The FFMB Program at WSR (in Willits, CA) was started in 2014 by Daniel Kitts, working in conjunction with the Golden Gate Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Dan was faced with a dilemma: He wanted to have this program available each week, for all 8 weeks of camp. How to do this? While any number of instructors would love to spend 7-8 weeks at camp, most folks cannot do that. Dan had the idea to put an invitation out to all the fly fisher folk he could reach. Invite people to come up to camp for one week to teach the FFMB. If 4 people a week could teach the program, no one person would have to dedicate 8 weeks to camp, only a week!

WSR provides the instructors with a dedicated spot in the Staff Camp, affectionately known as "Fish Camp". There are large tents, comfy cots and shower/bathroom facilities very close. There is also room for a small RV or trailer, a number of instructors will bring their rig up for the week. WSR also feeds the instructors for the week. Admittedly it is camp food, but all in all it is not bad. Essentially, room and board is provided for a week, all the instructors have to do is get to camp and teach the class!

The big draw for the week? Instructors can bring a non-motorized small craft and fish the lake in LOTS of places the Scouts cannot reach. Very large bass lurk in the lake, along with a bunch of bluegill. Most of the instructors who have participated multiple years will get up to camp on Saturday for a couple of evenings of great fishing before class starts.

The first couple of years we had no idea what we were doing! We winged it, made a ton of mistakes, and established the basis of the program. Along the way we brought in some core folks who help make the program work and are always the first to sign up for one or two weeks of instruction. We use an online sign-up site to coordinate the instructors and have between 90 and 125 volunteers that we send emails out to for volunteers. We have had instructors from Arizona, Oregon, and Washington. We are ALWAYS looking for more volunteers!

We instruct an average of 15 Scouts per week in two classes, morning, and afternoon. We can have as many as 12 Scouts per session, 24 per day. When we have that many kids it can get a little crazy! We also get a lot of parents who participate, if we have the rods, we take everybody who wants to learn. WSR currently has @30 set ups, some are kept for instruction, some are kept at The Tradin' Post for rental.

We have a total of 8 hours to teach the Merit Badge (4 days of instruction, 2-hours for each class). We have a morning and an afternoon class. We focus on casting, getting the Scouts able to get a manageable cast. Our goal is not to have a proficient caster, but to give the students a base to grow from. If we can teach them the basics, they can take it where (Continued next page)

Stanislaus Fly Fishers 2022 Board of Directors

President – Jim Bowen
Vice-President – Gus Link
Treasurer/Membership –
Dennis Stambaugh
Secretary/Webmaster –
Michael Hewitt
Outings – Bob Bullock
Raffles – Jim Goodwin
At-Large – Bud Heintz
At-Large - Pat Roe

Club News (cont.)

they want from there. If we can get them to get a fly on the water, hopefully we can get them on a fish!

We have the students tie two flies, a wooly bugger and a foam beetle. Simple ties, we spend one session on this. During this session, entomology, dry vs. wet flies and how many different flies they can tie. Usually, one or more of the instructors will bring out a couple of their fly boxes to impress the students! It is always interesting to me, to see the one or two kids who get it and tie some great flies.

Other things we cover: safety, basic first aid and hook removal, Leave No Trace, the Scout Outdoor Code, basic entomology, basic fly-fishing equipment, and basic knots. Again, giving the Scouts the basics and hopefully an appreciation of the sport so they can continue on if they wish.

Does this sound like fun to you? It is! I have participated in the program since 2014, most years going up for at least 2 weeks. I also manage the sign ups and equipment maintenance. I have an absolute blast and encourage those who are interested to contact us and get on the volunteer list.

If you are interested, contact either Daniel Kitts (dckitts@aol.com), Link (flylink48@gmail.com), or Dave Fontaine (djfontainecrew357@gmail.com)

The Fly Box - Mercer's Missing Link Caddis

Reports from the Lower Sac indicate that caddis flies are becoming the current hot ticket so I thought we'd visit an often-suggested pattern — Mercer's Missing Link. Developed by Mike Mercer, the Missing Link is described as that "fly pattern which links together common features of many different insects, and insect life cycles, making it appear a safe and attractive meal to fish in nearly any surface-feeding situation." For a comprehensive report on the fly's development by the tier himself, check out this [article](#). For an instructional video, check out Tim Flagler's YouTube video [here](#).

Have a suggestion for a Fly Box feature? Send it to me at:

webmaster@stanislausflyfishers.org

Hook: TNC 100 #14
Body/Thread: Olive 6/0 Danville
Rib: Pearl Crystal Flash
Thorax - Peacock-colored Dubbing
Spent Wing - Grey Straight Zelon
Hackle - Cree or Light Dun
Upper Wing: Bleached Elk Hair



Upcoming Outings and Events

Knights Ferry Salmon Festival - November (TBD)

Membership Information

Membership Dues (\$40) for 2022 are due now due and payable. For your convenience, we can now accept a credit card for your dues for an additional fee of \$1.00 to cover the cost of the transaction. All SFF memberships are "Family Membership" status; spouses, significant others, and/or children must also be FFI members to be official SFF members. FFI General Memberships include you, your spouse or co-habiting partner, and children under 18.

Reminder: Club dues DO NOT include FFI dues. FFI dues are paid directly to the FFI and must be maintained regularly since the SFF is an FFI Charter Club. If you are not an FFI Life Member, or do not pay for three years at a time, **you must renew your membership yearly!** **Remember to list the Stanislaus Fly Fishers as your Affiliated Club.** This is important due to our Charter Club status. The online application for FFI membership is linked below.

Mail Membership Dues to:
Dennis Stambaugh
3833 Blue Bird Drive
Modesto, CA, 95356

Comics



Suggested Reading

CalTrout's Five Rivers Challenge

caltrout.org | June 4, 2022

CalTrout's Five Rivers Challenge (5RC) is an epic fishing challenge that benefits California Trout's restoration and conservation work across the state. Anglers test their skills fishing the renowned wild trout waters of Northern California: the Pit, Fall, McCloud, Upper Sacramento rivers, and Hat Creek.

The Contest:

You and your teammate will fish each wild trout designated section of river over three days. Go for most fish. The biggest fish. The grand total in inches of fish from all rivers. Or, the total from a single river. Whatever your strategy, it's a unique challenge and there are great prizes to be awarded in each category.

The grand prize winner will be...

The team that catches the greatest total inches of trout from all five rivers. Their names will be engraved on the beautiful Five Rivers Trophy, permanently displayed at CalTrout's SF headquarters. All teams will receive great gear and other prizes. [More ...](#)

Grim 2022 drought outlook for Western US offers warnings for the future as climate change brings a hotter, thirstier atmosphere

theconversation.com | May 19, 2022 | Imtiaz Rangwala

Much of the western U.S. has been in the grip of an unrelenting drought since early 2020. The dryness has coincided with record-breaking wildfires, intense and long-lasting heat waves, low stream flows and dwindling water supplies in reservoirs that millions of people across the region rely on.

Heading into summer, the outlook is pretty grim.

One driver of the Western drought has been persistent La Niña conditions in the tropical Pacific since the summer of 2020. During La Niña, cooler tropical Pacific waters help nudge the jet stream northward. That tends to bring fewer storms to the southern tier of the U.S. and produce pronounced drought impacts in the Southwest.

The other and perhaps more important part of the story is the hotter and thirstier atmosphere, caused by a rapidly warming climate.

As a climate scientist, I've watched how climate change is making drought conditions increasingly worse – particularly in the western and central U.S. [More ...](#)

NCCFFI Report to Clubs - June 2022

By Dr. Mark Rockwell, President & VP Conservation, Northern Calif. Council, FFI

The Bay-Delta - Will We Ever Get Beyond Politics



I would like to take a moment to present to you some information about the California Bay-Delta watershed and its myriad of rivers and streams. This is actually the largest inland estuary in the western Americas, and all the major rivers from both the Sierra and the coastal mountains drain into it. The San Joaquin River watershed is 15,600 square miles in size, and the Sacramento River watershed is 26,500 square miles. If we were to include drainage from coastal mountains and streams, the total size is well above 55,000 square miles in total area. The entire state of California is 163,695 square miles. The Bay-Delta watershed makes up about 1/3 of our entire state. Approximately 30 million Californians receive water from this system. That is 3/4 of our total population!

To say this system is important is an understatement. In essence, it is the lifeblood of our state. The water from this system produces about 1/2 of all the fruits and vegetables for America, let alone exports to other nations. Historically, this watershed was the 2nd largest producer of salmon, behind only the Columbia River system. 10s of millions of salmon once returned annually to reproduce in this watershed's rivers and streams. The bounty this watershed had to offer was a primary driver of why when people came here they never went back. It is one of Nature's miracles and is available to all, as the state laws say.

However, it comes with a price, especially now when climate change and increased population and industry are calling for more water than it can provide, at least to keep everything alive. As we know, California is home to 1,000's of fish, birds and other wildlife who also are in need of water. We have the 2nd largest number of endangered species in the U.S.



Over the past 20+ years more and more calls for water have been made. However, California only get so much rain and snow, and as a result, water has become a limited resource. There is a state agency responsible to manage and oversee how our water is used, and to ensure we protect the “Public Trust Resources” - those natural resources we all share as citizens of our state. This is the California State Water Resources Control Board. Here is its Mission:



“To preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California’s water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use, for the benefit of present and future generations”.

For years the central Bay-Delta region has been suffering reduced water quality, saltwater intrusion, and other harmful changes related to water quality. One of the jobs of the Water Board is to periodically re-evaluate

watersheds for their health and quality. Under the federal Clean Water Act it must be done every 2 years. The last time the Bay-Delta water quality plan was updated was in 1995. We are seriously behind, and the Bay-Delta communities, like Stockton, know it. They suffer continually from water quality problems, as do other smaller communities in the region.

What is being done? In 2009 the State Water Board began work to update it’s plan for the Bay-Delta, and in December, 2018 the Water Board presented and approved phase 1 which deals with the San Joaquin system. The plan requires increased flows in tributaries to 40% of natural unimpeded flows. This was a significant change from normal, and brought immediate opposition from the state’s many regional water agencies.

They made a request of Governor Brown to put this on hold and allow all stakeholders to work together to find a way to meet the new standard through what are now known as Voluntary Agreements.

The Governor's office agreed, and we've been on hold since. No change in the horrible conditions in the Bay-Delta watershed, and for the cities and towns suffering from terrible water conditions. Many hours have been spent in negotiations and meetings, millions of dollars spent, and thousands of hours of time and effort have gone into the process. To date - 3 1/2 years later - no agreed to outcome has been reached. In late 2021 we in the fishing community made calls & sent letters to the Governor and state agencies asking to simply implement the already approved Water Board phase 1 up-date of the Bay-Delta water plan for the San Joaquin River. We've gotten no where, though late last year it looked like the Water Board would be allowed the implementation of phase 1. No such luck!

Where are We Now?

Phase 1 has not been implemented! The Governor and his administration as doubled down on the Voluntary Agreement process and they are only meeting with limited stakeholders - water agencies and NGOs who lean in their direction.

It appears now that the Governor's administration is ready to propose a deal. The deal would lock in high water diversions at great cost to many in California, including those of us who care about fisheries. This "agreement" does not have a single signature from a Bay-Delta water agency, environmental group, fishing or environmental justice NGO, Delta community city or Tribe. Even the groups in discussions agree many water agencies and other stakeholders don't support it. The 'deal' is designed by a group of powerful interests to continue the status quo of excessive diversions, and will not protect the natural resources of our environment or its fisheries.

Here are a couple of Resources you may need to see or use:

California Planning & Conservation League: Bay-Delta Water Plan, Where is it now?

<https://mavensnotebook.com/2021/02/03/planning-conservation-league-the-bay-delta-water-quality-control-plan-where-is-it-at/>

Fishing Group Letter - VA Funding: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YqBH3bbWz6wY3d5p1XIOb9GLZAP_p8Bh/view?usp=sharing

Environmental Advocates Letter - VA Funding: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Qrqk8F7Ev4TdzJ09r-Jy1O6eu1xVv5eG/view?usp=sharing>

What can You Do? - Send emails & phone to the below:

Toni Atkins, President pro Tempore California State Senate, 916-651-4039,
<https://sd39.senate.ca.gov/contact>

Anthony Rendon, Speaker California State Assembly, 916-319-2063,
<https://speaker.asmdc.org/contact-anthony>

Nancy Skinner, Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Comm, 916-651-4009,
<https://sd09.senate.ca.gov/email-senator>

Phil Ting, Chair Committee on Budget, 916-319-2019,
<https://a19.asmdc.org/contact>

Sisters on the Fly Workshop - May 13-14, 2022

SFF members Bob Bullock, John Driver, Mark Pieczarka, and Mike Hewitt held a two-day fly fishing workshop for twenty members of Sisters on the Fly, a national organization that boasts nearly 10,000 members! The event began Friday, May 13th, at the Sonora Fairgrounds with a day of basic casting instruction, as well as an overview of equipment, basic entomology, and primary knots. The members worked with small groups on casting in the morning, and after lunch gave the various other presentations.

Saturday saw members Bullock, Pieczarka, and Hewitt meeting with the ladies at Kistler Ranch for a few hours of on-the-water practice. Although a bit windy, the ladies managed to put in some decent time fishing, and several managed to actually catch some panfish and a couple of bass. All in all, it was a great weekend with the ladies stoked about fly fishing and our club members receiving many compliments on their efforts.

