



Sonoma County, CA
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November 2025

RRFF member Rick Baker ready to release a Trinity River wild steelhead. Read Ed Barich's report pg. 5

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www.rrflyfisher.org

President's Message By Daniel Powers

I will be fly fishing Christmas Island October 27 through November 4, 2025.

I have been focused on the California Fall Classic 100k Race around Lake Sonoma. I ran it in 17 hours and 41 minutes, covering 63.40 miles. The race became increasingly grueling as the miles added up, but I did reach my goal of completing the race.

Next month's President's Message will include RRFF administrative material from October and November 2025. My apologies for this delay.

Reminder, the Winter Dinner is February 21, 2026.

Sincerely, Daniel



Click [link](#) to club's 2025 calendar and outing sign-up sheets.

Club Activities	November Date & Time	December Date & Time
Fly Casting At the Pond Days & Hours	Daylight Savings Time Ends 11/2/2025 Winter pond dates & hours 11/15 & 29 12 noon to 2:30	Winter pond dates & hours 12/13 & 27 12 noon to 2:30
General Meetings will be held at the Vets Building	11/12 6:30 – 9:00 PM Lance Gray will speak (see info below)	12/10 6:30 – 9:00 PM Members invited to tell their best 2025 fish story
Putah Creek (Penelope)	11/15 TBA	X
Board Meetings	11/19 7:00 to 8:00 PM	12/17 7:00 – 8:00 PM
Russian River Spey Clinic November Click Link for prior slideshows (Mike Spurlock)	Date & time to be announced when river becomes steelhead shape.	X

RRFF General Meeting By Mike Borba

On November 12, 2025, Lance Gray will present "Steelheading on the Feather." He'll cover access points, fly choices, and how to present flies for successful steelhead fishing on the Feather River.

Book Fair General Meeting 11/12/2025 By Gregg Wrisley

When your fishing options become more limited this winter, it can be wonderful to find a comfortable place to curl up with a great fly-fishing book. The November General Meeting will once again include a Book Fair. Members are encouraged to bring fly-fishing books they no longer need and select new titles for winter reading. You may price your books, but this is mainly a book exchange. In addition, Steve Tubbs will be selling some books from the famous fly-fishing author Russell Chatham's personal library. Hope to see you at November's General Meeting.

Healing Waters Outing By Joe Hiney

I fished with nonprofit Healing Waters up on the Trinity, swinging flies with administrator Jeff French.

We were able to finagle a couple of those nice steelhead out of the waters near Junction City.



Jeff French with Healing Waters and his steelhead.

I spent a few weeks at the Needle Rock Visitor Center, on the northern coastal section of Mendocino County enjoying stunning scenery of the ocean shores and even discovering a Giant Pacific octopus in the surf.



Joe & Giant Pacific octopus (known for its intelligence, strength, and ability to camouflage and the largest of all octopi species).

Fall this is a great time of year to fish for Pacific halibut. The fish often swim near the shoreline at Shelter Cove, close to where the waves break. In the past, I've been lucky enough to catch a couple of those halibut, but this year I was unable to get to the beach due to my responsibilities as a camp host at Needle Rock.

For those who like to dabble in the saltwater this is a great place to try to catch some halibut from the beach. There are not only halibut in the surf, but there are perch, and even an occasional salmon.

Attention

Share Your Fish Stories at the
General Meeting 12/10/2025

At the December General Meeting, club members will present highlights and photos of their favorite 2025 fishing outing. If you'd like to share your story, please reach out to Mike Borba (click [link](#)) or Ed Barich (click [link](#)).

Fly Fishing the Trinity River & Lower Sac with my son By Spencer Bader



Spencer, good looking rainbow, and guide on the Lower Sac.

I just had two beautiful warm days of fishing the Trinity and Lower Sac with my son and Fly Shop guides. Great days of fishing, but only so-so catching.

Several fish each day broke off. We did see some half pounders on the Trinity and lots of salmon. My son landed a 22" steelhead to the boat.



Spencer's son on the Trinity with a nice steelhead.

On the lower Sac we had a double hookup on our first cast in the section above Posse Grounds Run. The trout were about 14 inches. Then some hits but no fish on for the next several runs. Ended up with a couple of 18-to-22-inch trout each by the end of the day. Again, we saw a lot of huge salmon on redds throughout the float down to the Bonny View Run near Redding. That run is famous for year-round wild rainbow trout.

Trinity River Memoir Walk and Wade & Swinging Flies By Dave Stone

Mike Spurlock and I left Novato on Wednesday, October 15, and returned home on October 19 after joining this year's RRF annual Lewiston Lake trip. Each year, we stay at the Lakeview Terrance Resort, arranged for the last 10 years by RRF trip outing coordinator, Ed Barich.

It is in an area with abundant opportunities to fish for fat rainbow trout in the reservoir lake or you can try your hand at spey casting for the ocean-going type of trout, better known as steelhead. It's a perfect area for our club members to try their skills at landing

either species of trout while also trying different methods of casting and rigging.

Also, the resort is comfortable and quiet with cabins and a RV/trailer park, with its own unique charm. Like last year, the club members brought food to share outdoors Friday and Saturday evenings. After long days of fishing no man went hungry either night. We all scarfed down delicious food prepared back at home or cooked in the cabin kitchen or BBQ on an outside grill. We assembled outside Mike's RV near one outdoor table (Mike saved our *bacon* because his RV had an exterior light that shone on the food table). There was an absence of the RRFW women at this year's event. There was sentiment expressed among some that the RRFW women would be able to return next year—We're hopeful. They were missed.



Mike and I sat in the bow and stern seats. Peter Santley, our guide, managed the oars taking us down the Trinity River. We admired the changing fall colors reflecting on the water.

Mike, I, and other club members often hire a guide with a drift boat to access fishing spots along the Trinity River's walk and wade gravel bars, swift runs, and to fish along vertical solid rock walls that are otherwise hard to reach. This river—always beautiful

and heart-pumping thrilling. It really is a fly fishers paradise.

I find two-handed spey casting both fun and challenging. I'm not an expert—far from it, but I can see this new spey casting passion becoming a lifelong pursuit. My resolution for the up-and-coming year is to focus on improving my technique. The Russian River is the nearest and quickest spot to practice. I'm waiting for rain to raise the flow so I can start swinging there. I'm counting on that to happen soon—fingers crossed. Though at times I find my impatient fingers tapping noisily on my computer desk.



Dave two-hand spey casting while Peter observed from boat.

The real challenge is landing those strong and feisty adult steelhead. I did land a wild half-pounder that our guide, Peter Santley, netted, but the two adult steelhead I had on my spey line were another story.



Dave, a half-pounder wild steelie, and guide Peter.

The first steelhead adult hit my fly as I secured my stance in the middle of the river's run Peter called,

"The Rocks." That run is above Sky Ranch access. The second adult steelhead on the second day hit my fly on a well-known and long run close to Junction City's ramp called *Radio Hole*. Both fish hit my line with a tug which slammed on the breaks halting my swinging line. I was instantly exhilarated. Snagged on a rock? Muscle memory took over as my heart started pounding. With my left hand grasping my line, I set hook. Then I raised my right-hand grasping my rod's cork grip moving my rod vertically and angling it toward shore keeping tight tension on the line. Fish-on!



Mike letting his fly swing into a swift run on river left.

Both fish struck hard at the colorful *hobo spey fly* tied securely to the end of my clear 10 ft., 12 lb. Rio Versileader. I cautiously kept tension on the line as I angled each steelhead toward the shore. There, Peter approached me and the steelhead with net in hand. Then the fish performed a maneuver resembling what Peter called a "crocodile roll." Although, in this case, both fish rolled straight up above the water's surface causing the *hobo fly* to twist and causing the fly's hook to release from its mouth but stay fastened to my line. The event was both shocking and oddly fascinating, as two different fish managed an extraordinary escape reminiscent of Houdini.

Losing those two adult steelhead remained, of course, disappointing. I was drained from the thrill. All Peter and I could do to console each other was to stare rather vacuously until Peter said, "You didn't do anything wrong." While this provided some relief

from my notably dejected state, the experience nonetheless encouraged me to consider planning a future visit to the Trinity River.

Obviously, I'm determined to land the elusive adult steelhead known as the "fish of a thousand casts." I must be close!

FOR SALE

Click [link](#) to access items for sale

- Don't you need a safety whistle?
- Donated fly-fishing items, new and used.
- On the website for sale to club members only.
- "First Come, First Served."

Thank you,
Mike Spurlock

Lewiston Reservoir 2025 Outing Report By Ed Barich

On the weekend of October 16-19, 2025, the RRF had our 10th annual outing at Lewiston Reservoir on the Trinity River. In attendance were Ed Barich, Mike Spurlock, Dave Stone, Gregg Wrisley, Rick Baker, Kevin Ostrom, Mitch Southard, Glenn Stanley, Joerg Olson, Ted Olson and Bill Mitchell. The weather cooperated with blue skies, low winds and temperatures up to the high 70s.



Mitch our tri-tip BBQ master.

Lewiston is known for good fall fly fishing for rainbow trout, and thanks to multiple plants by CDFW and Pine Cove Marina, the action on the lake was typical compared to previous years. The cool 45-50F water in this tailwater of the Trinity River made the fish fight with abandon. It took us a while to figure out where the fish were congregating, but once we did it was game-on. Most of the trout were caught stripping dark bugger-type streamers or using midge nymphs under an indicator. There was also trolling action for the boats that had motors. The size of the rainbows landed varied from 12 to 18 inches.



Ed and a Lewiston rainbow.

several half-pound steelhead were landed. The Trinity is quiet this time of the year, and a sight to behold in its autumn colors.

Most of us stayed at the Lakeview Terrace Resort, either in their RV park or in their clean and comfortable cabins. Thanks to those who participated, we enjoyed two delicious potluck dinners: tasty appetizers, BBQ oysters and beef tri-tip, fish tacos, pasta, refreshing salads, and delectable deserts. This “trout closer” was a great gathering of RRFF members and, as always, we are looking forward to continuing the Lewiston tradition next year.

Russian River Spey Clinic Scheduled for November 22 (But this is dependent on current river low flows)

- 8 AM – Meet for breakfast in Guerneville.
- 9 AM – Go to Johnson’s Beach for short introduction followed by casting until noon.
- If river flows do not improve, we will reschedule for December
- Details in [signup sheet](#)

Mike Spurlock



RRFF members settling around the elevated fire can after an enjoyable meal at Mike’s RV slot on a moonless and cool night.

Several of us also fished the nearby Trinity River, using spey rods with the assistance of local guides. Although the flows had been dropped to 300 CFS,

Announcement Recent Club Additions to the RRFF Web Site

- Drone videos of King Salmon on the Smith River. 10/09/2025 click [link](#). 10/12/2025 [link](#).

Recent Club Photo Slideshows Below:

- Lewiston Lake/Trinity River 10/16-19, 2025. Click [link](#).
- Wading Clinic 10/04/2025. Click [link](#).

Mike Spurlock

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Russian River Fly Fishers on Facebook

Please [click](#) join us online to enjoy:

- Updates on RRFF Events
- Local Flyfishing Information
- Flyfishing Instructional Videos
- Flyfishing Travel Videos
- Conservation Updates
- Fly Fishing Industry Updates
- Flyfishing Non-Profit & Charity Information
- Fishing Reports
- Flyfishing Photography & Inspiration

Our Facebook community has over 1,232 followers and provides links to various vendor and fly-fishing related sites at both local and national levels.

How to Contact Board of Directors & Coordinators

If you want to contact one or more of the Board of Directors and/or Coordinators below, then click on this link, which will bring you to our website.

<https://www.rrflyfisher.org/board-of-directors--coordinators.html>

The names of our Board of Directors and Coordinators will appear. You may click on a name and leave a message for any person below and our website will send it to their personal email address, and they will respond to your message.

RRFF Board of Directors

President: **Daniel Powers**

Vice President, Women's Events: **Penelope Gadd-Coster**

Secretary: **Michael Bluto**

Treasurer: **Tracie Koenig**

Webmaster, Membership, Assistant Treasurer (Square): **Mike Spurlock**

Casting Instruction Chairman, Facebook: **Steve Tubbs**

Outings Coordinator: **Ed Barich**

Pond Steward: **Doug Mackay**

Casting Instruction, Outings: **Don Shaw**

Casting Instruction, New Member Mentoring, Website Sales: **Jeff Cratty**

Raffle Coordinator, Education: **Gregg Wisley**

Women's Program Coordinator: **Genie Praetzel**

Program Speaker Chairman: **Mike Borba**

Website Sales, Outings: **Pam Boyd DeCoite**

Casting Instruction, Casting for Recovery contact: **Paul Matzen**

Coordinators

The Cast Newsletter Editor: **Dave Stone**

Steelhead in the Classroom: **Karl Joost**

Fly Tying at General Meetings: **Lee Soares**

Conservation Advisor, Cal Trout "Lost Coast Project Manager": **Charlie Schneider**

Conservation Advisor, Steelhead in the Classroom: **Tom Greer**

Women's North Sonoma County Outreach: **Leafa Fiore**

Fly Rod Building: **Rick Baker**

Russian River Fly Fishers Membership Application

(if possible, we prefer that you use the on-line application on our website where you can also pay online:

<https://www.rrflyfisher.org/membership-application--payment.html>

I acknowledge in this agreement, and fully understand, that it is a release of liability. I further acknowledge that I am waiving any right that I may have to bring legal action or to assert a claim against Russian River Fly Fishers (RRFF) for its negligence. This agreement is valid for all RRFF sanctioned events, (fishing outings, picnics, dinner fund raisers, meetings, pond casting clinics, etc.) some of which are open to the public and all of which are covered by RRFF insurance. As a club member you are approved to participate in certain covered events which are not available to non-members: fishing outings and training for fly-casting certification.

Note: Private activities arranged by club members (not sponsored or approved by the club) are not sanctioned and will not be covered by RRFF insurance.

I have read this statement and agree to its terms as a condition of my membership in the Russian River Fly Fishers.

***Indicates required field.**

*Name _____ *Date _____

*How did you hear about us? _____ *Referred by? _____

*Address _____ *City/State/Zip _____

*Preferred Phone: Home _____ or Cell _____ *E-mail _____

Occupation _____ *Signature _____

* I'm applying as a new member. Circle (Yes / No). I'm renewing my existing membership. Circle (Yes / No).

*Check the box below that is applicable:

- Single membership - \$50 annual dues
- Junior membership - \$25 annual dues (age 16-18 or live >75 miles from Santa Rosa)
- Gold membership - \$1,000 (one-time)
- Family Membership - \$55 annual dues. List family members: _____

Membership includes a woman who would like to be contacted by our RRFF Women's Group:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

The club would like to help you meet your fly-fishing needs. How many years have you been fly fishing? _____

Check any areas you want help with:

- I would like help learning or improving my fly-fishing cast.
- I would like advice on fishing equipment.
- I would like a lesson in tying knots.
- I would like a lesson in tying flies.
- I would like to have an experienced member mentor me on local waters or on a club outing.
- Any other areas not mentioned above _____

*How are you planning to pay? _____

Note: Dues paid by a new member joining the RRFF after March 1st of any year will cover the balance of that year and the membership dues for the following fiscal year. The RRFF fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th.

IF YOU PREFER, YOU MAY JOIN OR RENEW ONLINE at www.rrflyfisher.org. OR NEW MEMBERS, MAY MAIL THIS APPLICATION TO:

RUSSIAN RIVER FLY FISHERS, C/O MIKE SPURLOCK, 20 SAN DOMINGO WAY, NOVATO , CA 94945