

The Cast



Russian River Fly Fishers

Sonoma County California
Volume 44, Number 5
May 2017

Pyramid Lake Storm
(photo by Rick Bowlds)

Since June 1977
Visit our website at
www.rrflyfisher.org

President's Message Another Opener

By the time this message goes to press, the 2017 RRF Club Opener will probably be history. The late and record rains of this spring caused us to push the outing to the weekend after the true California trout opening day, but for most of us who have not been able to get in our usual quota of early season trips, this is hopefully the beginning of a new year of fishing adventure. Due to the snow-bound conditions in most of the Sierra, the Opener will be returning to Cassel campground near Baum Lake, the site of many enjoyable RRF outings of the past.

I consider the RRF outings to be one of the crown jewels of our club. They are a priceless opportunity

to get out and experience all that the great outdoors has to offer, as well as a chance to meet with like-minded members of the fishing community. We can't promise that every participant will catch a fish (although everyone *did* at the recent Pyramid Lake outing), but we can promise a chance to try out your angling skills and perhaps learn some new ones from

Newsletter Editor
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*Are you familiar with MS Word and
Desktop Publishing? Will help!*

Please contact Steve Tubbs - steve@kresky.com

your fellow members. We have a full calendar of events on our website that you can add to your personal calendar, ensuring that another season does not slip by without wetting a line.

And if your casting arm is feeling rusty from a winter of low usage, you might want to drop by one of our Thursday evening casting clinics at the pond in Galvin Park. Our dedicated casting instructors will be on hand to help you get your technique back to where it was at the peak of last season, and maybe take it on to the next level. I don't know about you, but a bit more casting accuracy would be a welcome addition to my fly fishing skills.

Many of our club members were recently present at the Fly Fishing Film Tour sponsored by Redwood Empire Trout Unlimited. We watched some amazing angling going on in some exotic locations – it was real fly fishing eye-candy and there was applause after each segment. But as I walked out of the theater, it occurred to me why the audience was so excited by the films. No doubt all of them had experienced some version of what they saw on screen – maybe their catches were not as big or the scenery was not as gorgeous, but they felt the same joy in their own fishing experiences. And the only way they got that thrill was to get outdoors and into the natural world.

It's time to get out there...

~ Ed Barich

Join the RRFF on Facebook

We currently have **805 members** on our RRFF Facebook page. You can keep up with the RRFF and our fly fishing and conservation community by joining us at:

<http://www.facebook.com/russianriverflyfishers>

Welcome New Members

The RRFF would like to welcome our newest members **RJ Askeland, Robert Martin, Russell Davenport** and **Dimi Valenzuela**. Our website @ www.rrflyfisher.org is your best resource to find our latest club news and a list of our monthly outings and events.

Please contact any board member if you have questions. **Welcome Aboard!**

RRFF General Meeting

Wednesday, May 10th - 7:00 PM

The Lodge Room at the Santa Rosa
Veteran's Memorial Building



~ Justin Miller ~
"Swinging Flies in Northern
California"

Justin Miller has worked for **The Fly Shop** in Redding California since 2004, and is an absolute Steelhead Junkie. He guides for steelhead in Northern California and on the Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia. He also hosts trips throughout British Columbia for steelhead...and everywhere else in the world for "anything that swims"...but the steelhead rivers of the Pacific Northwest will always be home.

During his college years, Justin discovered the steelhead rivers of Northern California and the chrome bright, sea-run rainbows soon stole his attention from the trout streams of the Sierra. He was hired by The Fly Shop in 2004 right after graduating from Chico State, and sunk into the steelhead lifestyle for good.

As he learned more about the waters close to home, the drive to explore farther away grew and soon he was chasing steelhead in Oregon and Washington, and making the annual pilgrimage to BC each Fall. In 2008, The Fly Shop gave him the opportunity to take over as head guide on Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula. It was a rare opportunity to chase trout and steelhead in perhaps the least impacted environment of the Pacific rim, an experience that proved to be beyond compare.

Justin Miller now works in the International Travel Department at The Fly Shop and specializes in spey fishing trips for steelhead, salmon and sea-run brown trout all over the world, as well as many other types of fishing (including peacock bass in the jungle and permit on the flats - just to name a few). Of course he still continues to guide in NorCal and on Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula for steelhead.

The presentation this month will be focused on the swinging opportunities close to home, in Northern California. Come down and hear all about the rivers of the Central Valley and the Coast Range, in summer and in winter, and all about the methods, flies and equipment you will need to be productive "Mining for Chrome" in the Golden State.

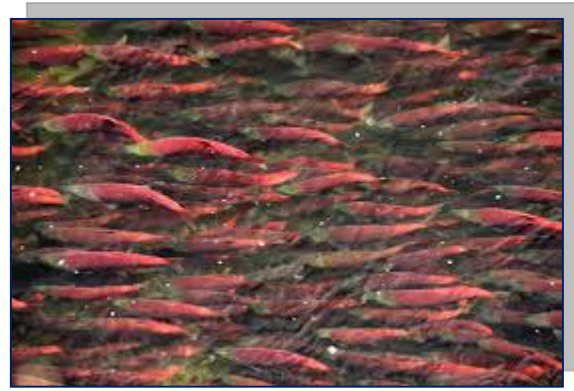
~ Joe Banovich, RRFF Program Director

Conservation Corner

Pebble Mine Redux

The trouble with specific conservation projects is that they almost never end. Organizations and individuals can successfully fight for a stream by pulling together to stop a particularly thoughtless project. This can take years of effort and large amounts of money, especially if litigation is involved (and when money is involved it almost always is). Unless through an act of Congress something permanent like a National Park is created, all that effort and work can be reversed by one vote. It used to be that the president could create permanent protections by designating National Monuments, but even that is up for grabs as locals around the new Bears Ears Monument in Utah are finding out. Maybe that's why dam removal projects have so captured our imaginations and enthusiasm. Once the fight is won and the dam is down, it seems unlikely another would go back up. Something physical has happened, rather than protection via the stroke of a pen.

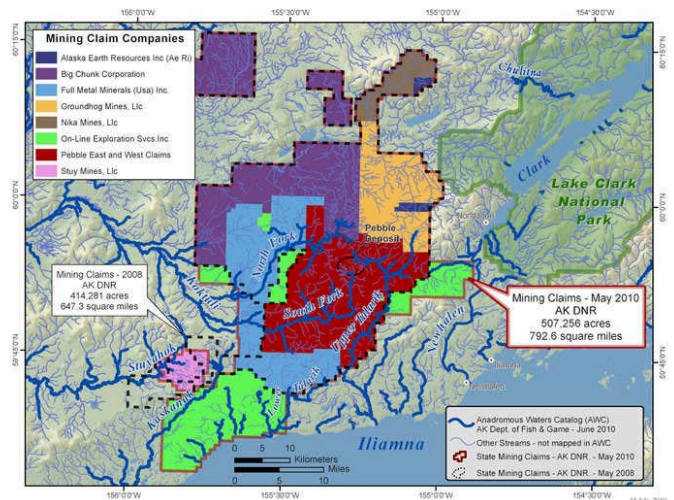
Which leads us to Bristol Bay, Alaska and the Nushagak and Kvichak Rivers, home to the greatest runs of sockeye salmon in the world. And all the bears, 'bows, eagles and forests that rely on this transport of protein and nitrogen from the sea in the form of fish. Just last year, it looked like a multi-year effort led by The United Tribes of Bristol Bay, organizations such as [SalmonState](#), [SaveBristolBay](#),



and Trout Unlimited had blocked the Pebble Mine, a massive open pit gold mine proposed in 2004 by a Canadian mining company, Northern Dynasty Minerals. The EPA had labeled the project as having a high risk of polluting the watershed and Alaska's typically extraction-friendly governor and legislature had even panned the project. It would have been the largest mine in North America. And it looked like the forces for good had killed it.

And then November 8th happened.

Articles immediately came out in commercial journals with titles like "Pebble Revived". It is clear that the extraction community believed that the new administration would be good for reviving the mine. In January, Northern Dynasty, which had been essentially worthless just months before, went back



out on the equity trail and began raising millions of dollars to revive the project. In February, Lamar Smith, the chair of the House Science Committee sent a letter to Scott Pruitt, new EPA administrator, urging him to rescind the earlier effort to block the

mine. With a slashed budget and workforce it's unclear if the EPA could or will re-enter this fight.

What can YOU do? Is there hope? A recent in-depth [article in The New Yorker](#) outlines all of the factors that make reviving the mining plan difficult, but not impossible. And we've had to get used to the fact that our regular political assumptions and checks and balances are not holding up.

So...go fish these waters and fall in love with the natural, wild beauty and the incredible fish that support the entire ecosystem. Bone up on the facts and get inspired by watching films such as [Tails from Bristol Bay](#) and [Red Gold](#). Make sure you have [your voices heard](#) so that Alaska doesn't go the same way as our own diminished waters. And donate to the organizations that are back in the fight like [Trout Unlimited-Alaska's Save Bristol Bay](#) campaign.

~ Derek Campbell, RRF Conservation Director



Rick Bowlds with his first Lahonton Cutthroat...

2017 Pyramid Outing Report

Nineteen RRF members endured cold and windy fishing weather at Pyramid Lake the weekend of April 6th - 9th. The winter damage to Highways 445 and 446 (and to many beaches as well) were repaired, so we had access to all of our favorite spots except for the South Nets. The Lake was reported to have risen a couple of feet, although it didn't seem to be much higher than last year on the west shore.

Recent local reports described the fishing as "improving", but many of us didn't have as many grabs as on previous trips. The fish were moving in schools, so there were long periods with no fish hooked along the many lines of anglers.

A few members, including Mike Tibbet, Heather Hamm, and Kelly Ames, landed double-digit numbers of fish in a day. Don Shaw, Ed Barich and Chris Castellucci landed 3 to 5 fish per day. I caught one fish a day and had no other grabs. Ken Young was very excited to land his first Pyramid Cutthroat after several years of trying. Jeff Cratty and Rick Bowlds also landed at least one fish on their first Pyramid outings. A couple of experienced Pyramid anglers, Walt Kruse and Steve Tubbs, each had days with no fish landed!

Even though the fishing wasn't so good, the dinners prepared by John Frenzel and friends were delicious, as usual. We had ribs and steaks with great side dishes.

I made a request for next year's reservation at Crosby's Lodge to be held the weekend of April 5th - 8th, or alternatively April 12th - 15th.

Hope to have you join us.

~ Ken Magoon

ADVENTURES IN TASMANIA

February 2017

Every good thing you've ever heard about fishing in Australia and New Zealand is true. My husband, Richard, and I just returned from 23 days of touring - six of which were spent fly fishing. Due to unexpected summer rain leading to cloudy rivers in Rotorura, NZ, my most looked forward to river float was cancelled. If you find yourself wanting to fish in beautiful Rotorura some day, I suggest you stay at Koura Lodge and fish with a guide named Peter Hill.

I must warn you that this part of the world is EXPENSIVE. Even though our dollar was strong, saving us 30% to the New Zealand dollar, a tourist needs to prioritize their spending. A typical glass of wine or mixed drink was \$17. Fishing gear was almost double what it is here. Guide services are nearly double as well! However, tips are not expected in restaurants, taxis, etc. I did find out that

the minimum wage in New Zealand is \$20 to \$25 an hour vs. our \$10 to \$15.

Further towards Queenstown in a quiet area of the South Island is the town of Wanaka. Richard and I hired Alpine Fishing Guides for a day, but due to muddy waters could not do the drift float we had planned on. We did catch a few 2 to 3 lbs. brown trout below a dam and had our first experience sight fishing.

Once we arrived in Tasmania, we were met at the airport by Peter Hayes who held the World Fly Casting Championships in 1981 and 1983. I met Peter Hayes in Bend, OR during the IFFF conclave's 50th anniversary. I had signed up for one of Peter's casting classes and walked away with an excitement for casting that I hadn't had before. Peter explained the arc and degrees in a way I could understand, and taught me about the "rock" in a long distance cast. During the class Peter borrowed my rod and reel and in one cast took ALL the line off my reel!

Last year I saw Peter again in Montana and he invited Richard and myself to come stay at his Cressy Lodge in Tasmania while he guided us for 6 days. This was an amazing experience all the way around. Did I mention Peter cooks too? When we arrived at his lodge there were approximately 12 world class guides, fly shop owners, etc sitting around the dinner table with waders, boots, white shirts, tuxedo jackets and bow ties. Peter was hosting this dinner for a well respected guide who was diagnosed with cancer. Those Aussies have big hearts! The fish stories around that table were hilarious. Little did I know what "guides" think of us "customers". I can only imagine what they say about me with my fuchsia reel, sparkle lanyard, and fish print leggings!

Apparently Tasmania has the purest genetic strain of Brown Trout in the world. They have never been bred in a hatchery, and they FIGHT like no other hatchery brown trout. The first brown trout came from England in 1864. Tasmania now sells brown trout ova to England.

Here is a recap of some of the places we fished and what we used:

Lake Fergus is a lake with the only access owned by Peter's friend, Randall, who graciously allowed us to fish in a row boat. It is a large lake located in a Natural Wilderness World Heritage Area. The



A Lake Fergus trophy...

average depth is only two feet. Needless to say, you could "see" these big trout. When Peter told us to cast about 2 feet in front of their noses, Richard and I panicked. Nervously, I told Peter that we did not have the skills necessary to do this kind of accurate, fast casting. Peter laughed and said "you will". We fished this lake two days, one of which was stalking and hunting due to the cloud cover. Holding rod low, and hunkering down in the boat to not cause a shadow. Probably scared more fish than we brought in, but we did haul in eight 3 to 4 lb brown trout, and broke four off. We used: 3x 14 ft leaders. Size 12 Purple Haze with 3x tippet. Peter uses a tippet ring before tying on the tippet. Something I'd like to try here.

One day we fished **Lake King William**. It is a Hydro Electricity Reservoir in the southwest Tasmanian mountains. Dry flies, small mayfly hatch. Smaller fish. Size 14 mayfly. 3x leader with 5x tippet. Gin and Tonics on the bank after fishing are a tradition for Peter and his clients.

On another day we fished **North Esk River** near Northern Midlands. Nothing was as good as Lake Fergus.

On the way home we would see many Wallaby (little kangaroos), wombats (look like a sturdy wart hog), and some Tasmanian Devils crossing the road. All of these are pouched animals. My most favorite little animal there was their version of our porcupine. This porcupine did not release his quills to protect himself. Rather, he would take his very long nails and dig into the plants and earth so you couldn't get him. Peter put gloves on and pulled one up for us to see. The porcupine kept covering his eyes with the



An Echidna...

back of his front paws and peeking out of one eye at a time and then quickly covering his eyes again. If he couldn't see us, he thought we couldn't see him.

All in all, a great fishing experience.

~ Richard and Christie Geernaert

**Check out the Russian River Fly Fishers
on the Internet at**

www.rrflyfisher.org

**for outings information, RRFF events,
member news, photos and more!**

New RRFF Club Outings

At our last RRFF Board meeting, we discussed ways to improve participation in our club fishing outings.

As it stands now, we try to have at least one fishing outing each month. Many of our current offerings have been repeated for many years and are often scheduled at a distant location for a weekend. We typically plan them around trout and steelhead fishing locations and occasionally mix in outings for bass or surf perch.

Recognizing that our RRFF membership is a vast resource of fishing information and experience, we would like to encourage other members who have favorite local fishing waters to share their knowledge with us by offering a new RRFF Outing.

Here are a few ways that **you** can participate:

- 1.) Offer to lead and organize a trip to a lake or river that you are familiar with. This could be a day or weekend outing (...like Lee Soares' shad outing at Verona on Memorial Day weekend.)
- 2.) Volunteer to assist on a club outing. This could involve setting up food arrangements and meals, providing directions, or just sharing your fishing knowledge with others during the outing.
- 3.) Suggest an outing to a local (or distant) fishing location that you think other club members would enjoy...and help organize it!

We are looking for new trip leaders and new fishing opportunities. If you would like to offer your help, please contact Ken Magoon (magoon5295@aol.com) or one of our other Board members. All contact information is listed in our monthly newsletter.



This is RRFF member Jack Dufour, 10, with his first crappie...on his maiden voyage in a float tube!

Donate your extra fly fishing gear to our [RRFF Bargain Table](#) (at every General Meeting). A fellow member could use it!

Support Our Local Fly Fishing Businesses!

(and take advantage of their discounts when available)

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www.archuletasreelworks.com

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(707) 588-8033,
fax (707) 588-8035
www.outdoorproshop.com

Calendar of Events

RRFF Thursday Evening Fly Casting Clinics
from 4:30 until 7:00 pm
every Thursday (weather permitting) at the
RRFF Casting Pond in Dan Galvin Park, Santa Rosa.

May

- 4-7 **RRFF Trout Season Opener** - Cassel, CA
(Hosts: Steve, John, Heather, Tim & Kelly)
- 10 RRFF General Meeting
- 17 RRFF Board Meeting
- 25-29 **Memorial Day Weekend Verona Outing** -
hosted by Lee Soares

June

- 10 **RRFF Annual Club Picnic** at the Casting Pond in
Dan Galvin Park. Festivities begin at 11:30 am.
- 21 RRFF Board Meeting
- 23 **Lake Almanor Hex Hatch** with Lance Gray
(hosted by Ed Barich)

RRFF Board of Directors

President: **Ed Barich**

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Vice President: **Doug Mackay**

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Secretary and Outings Chairman: **Ken Magoon**

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Treasurer & Webmaster: **Mike Spurlock**

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

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Program Chairman: **Joe Banovich**

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Library Master: **Don Shaw**

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Member at Large: **Mike Kast**

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Membership Chairman: **Doug Mackay**

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Member at Large, Casting for Recovery: **Paul Matzen**

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Member at Large: **Ken Young**

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Conservation Chairman: **Derek Campbell**

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Coordinators

Day Fishers & Fly Tying: **Lee Soares**

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Women's Activities: **Susan Bostwick**

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Raffle Coordinator: **Christie Geernaert**

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Casting Pond Stewards: **Doug & Sage Mackay**

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Casting Pond Monitor: **Binky Castleberry**

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Newsletter Editor: **Steve Tubbs** (temporary)

765-1787 steve@kresky.com

Russian River Fly Fishers
P.O. Box 2673
Santa Rosa, CA 95405



Russian River Fly Fishers Membership Application

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. Any member who invites a non-member (including member's spouse and family) agrees that such guest is bound by the same conditions and agrees to so advise the guest. I have read this statement and agree to its terms as a condition of my membership in the Russian River Fly Fishers. This agreement is valid for all RRFF sanctioned events, (fishing outings, picnics, meetings).

Name _____ Date _____ Referred by _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone _ _____ Work Phone _ _____ E-mail Address* _____

How Can You Help the RRFF? _____

Occupation _____ Signature _ _____

* Required for e-mail newsletter

Please mark one of the following categories:

I apply as a new member: **Single membership** – \$50 annual dues **Gold membership** - \$1,000.00 (one-time)

Family membership – \$55 annual dues [JOIN ONLINE @ www.rrflyfisher.org](http://www.rrflyfisher.org)

Junior membership – \$25 annual dues

Existing membership renewal: **Single membership** – \$50 annual dues **Gold membership** - \$1,000.00 (one-time)

Family membership – \$55 annual dues [RENEW ONLINE @ www.rrflyfisher.org](http://www.rrflyfisher.org)

Junior membership – \$25 annual dues

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

Please mail this application and your check payable to: **Russian River Fly Fishers**
c/o **Mike Spurlock, 20 San Domingo Way, Novato, CA 94945**