



# HENRYS LAKE FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

January, 2005

## President's Message

Dear Members;

2004 was surprisingly a great year for your Foundation punctuated by some very large fish out of Henrys. Double digit fish were not unusual! This year's catch rate was poor but a lot of trophy fish were caught. The numbers of caught fish were encouraging toward the end of the season.

The big news story of the year has been our heading up the Targhee and Howard Creek fish passage project. For details of the project see the next article by Bob Bartsch, Project Director. Many thanks to U.S. Senator Mike Crapo and to Don Dixon and John Hoehone of the Senator's office. Their strong support and that of Chuck Winder, Chairman of the Idaho Transportation Department Board made this project a success.

This fish passage project put our Foundation on the map! We started the ball rolling with a large financial commitment and in two months the State funded the design and construction with an aggressive timeline for completion of Fall, 2005. This project amounts to 20 times the size of any previous project we

have attempted as a Foundation and paves the way for the future of the Yellowstone Cutthroat. Meanwhile, we need to raise the bar of our membership base and participation. This will be our high priority for 2005. Our Board looks forward to a successful 2005, your help and attendance at our annual picnic on July 2.

We still need more water- our biggest single problem. This fall started out with above average precipitation and now is at 110% of average snow water equivalent for the basin, 115% for White Elephant(Henrys Mountains) and 110% for Island Park. The Lake is 71% full.

Ron Slocum, President

## Targhee and Howard Creek Fish Passage Project

This is a story of an ideal conservation project. It began as one of those things that **"can't be done!"** In early June, 2003 Damon Keen with some HLF members were standing below where Targhee Creek flows through the culverts under Highway 87. Damon and other F&G personnel had just counted over 300 Yellowstone Cutthroat trout that were blocked from reaching their spawning

grounds by the culverts that had raised the water several feet above the downstream pool. As Project Director for the Foundation, that summer, I was daunted by the cost and scope of construction to allow fish passage. Obviously, a little group like ours could never afford such an expense! Then, the idea evolved for moving the fish around the obstruction. "Let's just take the first step-not worry about total picture." We began to organize volunteers from the Foundation during the winter. Then a boy scout troop from Rexburg coincidentally contacted Jim Fredericks of the F&G looking for a possible project they might help with. Jim referred them to HLF and we jumped at the opportunity. The fish capture and translocation became an Eagle Scout project using volunteers from Scout Troop 306 managed and organized by Everett Evans of Rexburg. By mid-May Targhee was running full blast and we began meeting at the creek twice a week to capture the fish by portable shocking with the help of Damon Keen. Foundation volunteers and a few of the boy's parents helped to catch the boys who were washed downstream and to



Mike Homza(right) and Michel Ybarrondo of GeoEngineers, Inc. performing necessary stream assessment studies on Targhee Creek.

carry the fish-laden nets when they became too heavy. The volunteers worked in some of the worst spring weather Island Park could produce and moved about 150 fish past the obstruction losing only one fish that we know of.

The next chapter began at a friend's party where we were talking about the project. Someone stepped up and said I needed to talk with his partner, a lobbyist from Washington DC. Kevin Kruke of Strategic Communications, Inc. was optimistic that the project had a chance and outlined a plan to try to publicize and maybe fund the bridge building project.

We solicited the help of John Hoehone, Chief of Staff for U.S. Senator Mike Crapo. Senator Crapo became interested in our idea and fortunately, allowed Don Dixon, who is Crapo's **Charges des Affaires** of Agriculture, to help organize a meeting with various state agencies. HLF enlisted the help of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition and Henrys Fork Foundation knowing they both had more experience with projects of this nature. Don Dixon, "the maestro of action", organized a meeting in the early summer to discuss our project with key representatives of the Idaho F&G, Transportation Department, U.S. Forest Service, and National Resource Conservation Service. Our progress became stalled by the need for an engineering stream assessment that the state would not be able to accomplish for two years. The financial

contributions of the three Foundations plus the Taft Foundation funded the assessment and broke the log-jam. Mike Homza of GeoEngineers, Inc. of Boise performed the studies and wrote the report on both Targhee and Howard Creeks. Report complete our project went to the Idaho Transportation Board of Directors under the leadership of Chuck Winder in November and was approved and funded. The engineering design process and permitting is now well under way. Our goal is to complete the construction of a small bridge for Targhee Creek and a larger culvert for Howard Creek this fall.

Oh, yeah! Everett Evans was awarded his Eagle Scout Badge on December 7; well earned indeed! And, another Boy Scout troop is organized to help Foundation volunteers with fish capture and translocation next spring-the last time this should need to be done!. If you would like to volunteer for this project please contact our secretary Carolyn Keen at 208-558-7202. Working on this project has truly been a grass-roots effort with heart-felt labor from all those mentioned above. Success was not possible without every single person's contribution. To all of you I say thank you and well done! Bob Bartsch, Vice President

Louis Trager passed away suddenly on Sunday, July 25, 2004. A gentle man who moved with us and touched us with his soft smile and open friendliness. A favorite of the Henry's Lake Foundation, a life-time member who served on the Board of Directors and as Treasurer. His quiet caring and diligent stewardship of the Lake



and efforts to enhance the fishery is what he did with us. A gentle man who came into our moments spreading a warm remembrance, a gentle soul who pitched-in to help with quiet grace and enthusiasm at each of our yearly picnics. What we did not suspect is how he surrounded us with his warmth. This is what we won't forget. This is what made old summer friends and new friends look forward to seeing him. This is what brings gratefulness to us all that he was a part of us.

# HENRYS LAKE FOUNDATION BALANCE SHEET

Account Balances

As of 8/31/04

Bank Accounts	Balance
First Interstate	2,062
Key Bank-ckg	254
McDonald Invest. MM	54,707
Yellowstone Basin Bank	16,872
Overall Total	73,894
Cash Flow(1/1/04-8/31/04)	
Category Description	
<b>Inflows</b>	
Auction & Picnic	12,732
Donations	200
Interest Inc	278
Membership Dues	3,475
Total Inflows	16,686
<b>Outflows</b>	
Auction Expense	3,524
Bank Charge	4
Misc	139
Newsletter	
Postage, mailing	445
Printing	971
Total Newsletter	1,417
Payroll, contract labor	2,730
Total Payroll	2,730
Total Outflows	7,814
Overall Total	8,872

## Idaho Fish and Game Report

By Damon Keen

The end of the season report for the Fish and Game sounds somewhat like a broken record of the last few years. Some good news and some not so good news. Therefore, I'll break down the report in that vain.

### The not so good news

1)Poor water quality, namely low dissolved oxygen levels, in the spring led to low egg survival. Even though we spawned some 4.7 million eggs, only 1.2 million successfully eyed. Therefore, only 38,000 hybrids were available to plant this fall. Approximately, 925,000 cutthroat were planted. Our goal for the fall plant was

200,000 hybrids and 1.3 million cutthroat. Our planted numbers fell below the goal.

2)Although a full scale creel census was not conducted this year, the catch rate from all reliable indicators was below objective.

### The good news

1)For the first time since I've been at Henrys (the 2001 season), a large percentage of the catch included one and two year old fish.

2)Our spring gill net numbers showed the best cutthroat average since 1998, but likewise that catch was composed of mostly one and two year old fish.

3)The spring forecast of a

record low water level did not materialize. At the end of the summer draw down, the lake stood at 65% of capacity or about 58,000 acre feet. The level was much below the average, but not nearly as severe as it might have been and the level was above the 2001 ending level.

4)The fall cutthroat plant of approximately 925,000 was composed of fish that averaged larger than normal size. Fall plants went well.

5)By most indicators, the catch rate overall showed improvement from last season.

6)Once again, many fisher folk caught world class fish at Henrys. Henrys again was tough to beat for once in a lifetime fish.

7)Indicators point to good survival of two year old brook trout. Next season, Henrys should again be a good bet to pick up large brooks.

8)Summer water quality showed significant improvement.

9)The Lake froze over November 21, three weeks later than usual allowing high oxygen saturation. Our first water quality measurements showed super saturation at most sites.

Most of the data is pointing to improvement. Henrys showed some short lived flashes of its old self. If we look at historical data, rebounds at Henrys are often quick. With continued water improvement, I'm looking forward to next season. As always my door, email, phone, and mailbox are always open. I welcome and encourage any dialog.