

Fall Newsletter 2014

President's Message

Windy and wet aptly describes this season at Henrys Lake. Year after year it seems as though the wind has become stronger, churning Henrys, clouding the water and one would assume creating a feeding frenzy for the fish. It always seems as though it takes a couple of days to get back to normal and then again the wind blows. The rains kept the lake level high and there was only a moderate draw down for irrigation by the North Fork Reservoir Company.

But nonetheless it was a good fishing year at Henrys, albeit with not many fish above the 6-8 lb range. The Yellowstone Cutthroat trout seem to fight better than normal. Some people have suggested that may be attributed to the natural reproducing fish being stronger. There were plenty of Brook trout and pods of them were a common sight in front of their favorite tributaries. Hybrids were less frequent but still recognizable when they make that first big run.

As the Foundation enters its 33rd year, we have much to be proud of. As I write this newsletter, we are in the process of replacing the last two wooden diversion screens on the tributaries. Overall we have replaced or installed 11 of the steel modular diversion screens and they have been a major factor in improving the natural reproduction of the YCT. Of course all the culvert and bridge installations have also been integral to improving fish passage. Some say that the improvement in natural reproduction is an incredible turnaround story and quite possibly one of the most successful in Idaho.

Please join me in welcoming back Regional Fisheries Biologist Damon Keen. He and Carolyn returned to Henrys at the end of June. He returns with a fresh set of ideas and the passion he has always shown as a steward of this lake. I look forward to working with him as we continue to improve the fishery. Currently he and fisheries biologist Jon Flinders are periodically setting gill nets and taking tissue and stomach samples as part of a stable isotope analysis to determine what fish are consuming. This will help us determine what the Utah Chubs are eating and the extent to which their diets overlap with the trout.

I want to thank Jessica Buelow for doing an outstanding job in her 3-year stint as our fisheries biologist. She brought a unique perspective that was independent of any preconceptions. It was refreshing to hear her ideas and work with her. We wish her all the best in her move to Salmon, Idaho and her work there.

I know to many, myself included, the cancellation of our annual summer fundraiser and dinner was a big disappointment. It was the first time I can remember missing this event. But we have already taken steps to plan next year's fundraiser. This time it will be at Henrys Lake State Park on Friday, July 3rd and will be much more casual with hamburgers, hotdogs and refreshments.

This newsletter includes a number of project photos, along with photos of fish and some of our great birds. The wildlife of Henrys Lake really makes it something special. I hope you enjoy them.

In closing this message, I want to stress the importance of member participation for the continued success of our organization. I implore you and anyone you know to become more directly involved in our efforts. It is essential that we have a broader level of participation from our membership. We all want us to be successful.

Thank you for your continued support,

Phil Barker President, Henry's Lake Foundation

Farewell to Henrys Lake

Jessica Buelow, IDFG Regional Fisheries Biologist

It was a hard decision to leave my position at Henrys Lake. The scenery, wildlife, fishing, hiking, and biking was better than many places I have lived before. Not to mention, it was also a great job that was very diverse and challenging. I also had the pleasure to work with some amazing people, many whom became friends. It was a pleasure to work with the Henrys Lake Foundation on a variety of projects. We were able to study the behavior of pelicans on the lake, which led to the inclusion of Henrys Lake in the statewide research study to track where they are nesting. We worked together in educating the public about how to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species and created disinfection stations around the lake. We were also able to use money from Henrys Lake Foundation donations as a match component, which allowed us to apply for grants for habitat improvement projects on the tributaries of the lake. We were able to replace the rest of the worn down fish screens on ditches, repair several water gaps that were causing increased sediment loads in streams, remove an artificial fish barrier on Targhee Creek, and improve over 1,200 feet of riparian habitat on Duck Creek. These projects and future projects will continue to improve spawning habitat and natural reproduction for Yellowstone Cutthroat trout! I will miss all of the enthusiasm of all of the volunteers that would fight the cold and bad roads to come help spawn in the spring time. I won't miss watching the fish ladder day after day wondering where the fish were and when they will show up. They always came though, and what a great opportunity to see so many beautiful fish in one location. It was great to see the fish size starting to improve this spring and likely more so in the coming years. It was a pleasure to work with the people at Henrys Lake and I was inspired by their dedication to the fishery and the environment.

I have moved on to Salmon, Idaho where I am working for Idaho Fish and Game focusing on habitat restoration for salmon, steelhead, and other native fish species. I have been enjoying the community here and learning my new environment. I've replaced chasing large brook trout in the fall to chasing steelhead. I will be back to fish the lake during some of my favorite times of the year and will keep my eye out for familiar faces. I can still be contacted at jes-sica.buelow@idfg.idaho.gov.

Return to Henrys

Damon Keen, IDFG Upper Snake Region-Henrys Lake Fishery, Habitat Biologist

Back at Henrys and excited does not go far enough. To be able to work, live and recreate in one of the most incredible areas in Idaho is surreal. As this second stint at Henrys begins, working on 11 years total, I can say I haven't regretted a single minute here. It's good to be back.

The reasons so many of us, including Carolyn and I, choose to be here are endless. The world-class fisheries, incredible hunting, abundant wildlife, limitless hiking, and sheer beauty are all good enough to make us call Island Park home. However valid those reasons are, for me personally they miss another element and that is people.

People who care enough to protect what we all treasure are the people who devote endless hours to raise funds to protect "our" lake, and people who volunteer to spawn fish, help gill net, collect data or plant willows. There are landowners who selflessly give up economic benefit to protect habitat, and people who share their fishing experiences, positive or negative, because management begins with them. Then there are people reaching their zenith of life who would rather be here than anywhere else, and our friends who have cast their final fly here.

Despite all this, the road forward will be filled with challenges and pitfalls. There will be disagreements over the how to move forward. There will be invasive species issues, dissolved oxygen concerns, drought, and yes, tough fishing years. But it's impossible to move forward without you, without us, without more of us.

I sometimes drive over the Targhee Bridge and think to myself, how did that happen? It's inspiring to note how a task "too big" can be easy with collective shoulders. Those are your shoulders, no our shoulders. I'm looking forward to the future of this amazing resource. damon.keen@idfg.idaho.gov

Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout (YCT) Natural Reproduction Phil Barker

With the dramatic increase in natural reproduction comes a significant fishery management challenge for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Stocking counts must be adjusted to balance the total fish population so as to not over stock the lake, reducing the size of fish. This is monitored quite closely by the IDFG primarily through gill net surveys. Both quantity of trout and chubs are tallied, as well as their sizes. Each YCT is checked to see if the adipose fin is clipped. Ten percent of all stocked YCT fry have this fin clipped. The difference between the percentage of fin-clipped fish caught in the gill nets and the 10% figure is used to estimate the percentage of natural reproduction.

It is important to keep close tabs on the contribution of natural reproduction in the fish-



Cuttie with very few spots and bold red gill plates. October fish that took a Halloween fly. I love these 'pure' cutties.

ery. IDFG Habitat Biologist Damon Keen is trying to better estimate the percentage of natural reproduction through other means than just the gill net statistics. By placing fish weirs in the tributaries when the fry are migrating downstream back into the lake the fry can be counted. Although this process is tedious and time consuming since the traps need to be checked several times a day, the contribution of natural reproduction to the overall lake fish population can be better estimated. It will be exciting to see the results of this research!

Future HLF Projects

Phil Barker

As we look to the future there are still many opportunities to improve the fishery habitat.

Hope Creek has long been neglected and at one time offered great spawning and nursery habitat for the YCT. Over the years however, the degraded stream flows from diversions have negatively impacted its contribution to natural reproduction. In addition there have been no diversion screens installed causing fry to get caught in field irrigation diversions.

Rock Creek is a tributary of Duck Creek. This is another tributary that needs to be evaluated for potential improvement. An old diversion exists high up in the drainage. To date only a limited set of observations are available regarding spawning and nursery habitat.



Late Season 4 lb Hybrid On a brown leech

Future HLF Projects—CONTINUED Phil Barker

<u>Timber Creek</u> has been a favorite hangout of the pelicans. In the spring the mouth of this tributary is inundated with pelicans. Large fish and their redds can be spotted in this tributary above Henrys Lake road. Much of the upper sections of the creek are not fenced. Currently, the HLF is working with a landowner to improve a water gap for livestock that will reduce sediment entering the stream.

<u>Howard Creek</u> is entirely fenced from the highway to the state park except for cattle watering areas. One of the areas just above the pond and above the fish ladder (where we just installed the two modular steel diversion screens) needs improvement. We look forward to working with the local land owner to narrow the cattle watering area and firming it up in order to reduce sediment.



Pelicans at the mouth of Timber Creek in May.

Over 90 were counted.



Was it something I said? Two bald eagles having a spat.



Interesting neighbors, golden eagle keeping a watchful eye on the pelicans

So as you can see there are still many habitat improvement projects in the pipeline. Your generosity is what makes all of this possible. Please take this opportunity to donate. We are extremely grateful for any and all donations. Thank you!



Trumpeter swans returning once again to Henrys on their migration south for the winter.



Blue Herron sunning himself also spent a lot of time grooming

Completed HLF Projects

Phil Barker

Diversion Screens—During the week of October 20th two wooden diversion screens on Howard Creek just above the fish ladder were replaced with modular steel screens. These two screens represent a milestone for the foundation. There are 11 diversion screens on the tributaries and they are all now modular steel structures. This effort has taken years to complete and the results speak for themselves: natural reproduction of the Yellowstone Cutthroat trout has increased significantly. No longer are we losing fry in the irrigation ditches as they make their way downstream back into the lake.



Built-in head gate integral to the design along with a traditional paddle wheel

This particular diversion screen could not take advantage of the traditional paddle wheel design, hence the solar panel, batteries and electric motor. Black Mountain of the Henrys Lake range in the background.





New modular screen design created by Jim Parks of the screen shop in Salmon, ID. He created this design specifically for the pond on Howard Creek that has moderate flows through two diversions.

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IDFG Fisheries Habitat Biologist Damon Keen viewing the rehabilitated section of Duck Creek where a culvert was removed as part of the re-routing of Red Rock Rd. in 2011.

Fisheries Biologist
Lee Mabey of the US Forest
Service lead the culvert
removal and road re-routing
project. Lee was subsequently awarded the Louis
Trager memorial award for
his incredible leadership and
perseverance on the project.
It took several years to complete and extensive interaction
with the landowners.





It is always rewarding to see such a dramatic improvement in the habitat. Look at this beautiful cut bank and all the shade for cooler water—which is important on Duck Creek.





Lower section of Duck Creek showing restoration work completed in 2013. The eroded mud bank is already gone and the new willow clumps are starting to take hold. Need to be watchful of moose in this area given all the large willows. It is always fun to see moose feeding along the shore when fishing in front of Websters.

Just up from the restoration area is a hardened cattle watering area that was completed in 2012, reducing stream sediment. The HLF has partnered on several of these structures.



Henrys Lake Update

Damon Keen, Upper Snake Region-Henrys Lake Fishery, Habitat Biologist

Henrys Lake Habitat Program

Our data indicates that we are seeing significant natural production over the last few years. Some of these increases can be attributed to better water conditions. However, restoration has almost certainly been a driving force.

Although much has been completed over the past and we're seeing positive responses from naturally spawning cutthroat, we are now working towards other vital habitat projects that will further bolster natural production. Upper Duck Creek, Rock Creek and Hope Creek are three tributaries that we will be assessing and proposing restoration projects for in the coming months and years. Other work remains on Howard, Targhee, Duck and Timber Creeks. There is not a lack of important habitat restoration projects in the future and with collaborative efforts, we will continue to make progress. An important part of restoration begins with prioritization. We will be reprioritizing restoration efforts in the coming months so money is spent wisely.

Natural Production Evaluation

As already mentioned, the increase in natural production has been exciting. The IDFG would like to further quantify this increase. Throughout our planning period this winter, we'll be identifying the best ways to do that. We hope to implement an evaluation next year that will provide valuable insight into natural production and will help in pointing us towards restoration projects in the future.

Angler Access

Angling access was improved late summer. The Pintail Point Access site was improved as well as the Henrys Lake Hatchery Access site. Both improvements will provide more opportunity for the anglers. Our thanks go to Chris Hunt for providing the Pintail Point site. With limited access around the lake, this site allows the tubers good access to a popular spring and fall fishing area.

Fall Planting

The fall plants went well with excellent water temperatures for release. Our target release numbers are 750,000 cutthroat, 200,000 hybrids and 100,000 brook trout. The 2014 actual numbers were 728,886 cutthroat, 167,055 hybrids and 83,200 brook trout. Although our numbers were below target for 2014, we should see good survival based on stocking conditions.

A reminder on the reduced numbers of cutthroat stocked over the past years: If you recall, a few years ago we were stocking approximately 1.3 million cutthroat. These numbers combined with our increasing natural production resulted in excellent catch rates, but smaller fish. In order to bring our average size back to management objectives, we reduced

stocking numbers of cutthroat only. We will continue to monitor fish numbers and size to make sure that we are doing everything possible to reach both objectives.

Fall Catch Rates and Sizes

The fall fishing has been spotty at times. But overall anglers are reporting good catch rates. Anglers seem to be satisfied but many would like to see larger fish. Consequently, other anglers are reporting a few more of these large fish than the past couple of years. The IDFG gill net data indicates an increase in condition factor (fatter fish) as well. That's good news for the anglers who travel to Henrys with the hope of landing a fish of a lifetime. As mentioned above, we continue to collect a large amount of data annually to confirm the trends on fish numbers and sizes. This data collection gives us the ability to adjust to meet both the angler and IDFG expectations.



Beautiful October Brook Trout 3 1/2 lbs Caught on a brown leech

Gerrard Milt

Dan Garren, IDFG Regional Fisheries Manager

As many HLF members know, IDFG has been working with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks to obtain Gerrard strain rainbow trout milt to use with our hybrid trout program on Henrys. We attempted to get this project started last year, but FWP did not have enough milt available to supply us with our request. We have started communications with them again this year in the hopes that supply is better, and we can obtain the necessary quantities to convert our hybrids over to the new strain. Ultimately, we are hopeful the new strain of milt will help create a larger hybrid, and increase angler satisfaction. Like all projects, this one will be evaluated for several years, and final decisions on its effectiveness will follow that evaluation. Once the project is up and running, observations from anglers on the condition of these hybrids would be welcome and incorporated into that evaluation.

Stable Isotope Analysis

Jon Flinders, IDFG Fisheries Biologist

IDFG has partnered with the Henrys Lake Foundation to look at the diets of trout and Utah chubs in Henrys Lake to figure out if the two species eat - and ultimately compete for - the same food resources. Figuring out if, how and when these species' diets overlap is a necessary step to evaluate the potential for competition between trout and chubs. We have collected Yellowstone cutthroat trout, hybrid trout, brook trout, and Utah chub each month (May – October) using gill nets. Stomachs were then removed, and we are in the process of cutting open the stomachs to determine fish diets similar to the studies done in 2004 and 2010.

Although traditional stomach content analysis is useful to see what a fish has eaten at that exact point in time, it cannot account for feeding behavior over an entire year, or even an entire month. In other words, we are only able to determine what the fish consumed in the last 24 hours, and this could vary based on food availability, preferences, etc. A relatively new approach to look at diets is using a method called stable isotope analysis. This method basically looks at the amount of carbon (δ^{13} C) and nitrogen (δ^{15} N) isotopes in both trout and chubs, and determines the amount of overlap that occurs among all species. The advantage to this approach is that it can capture food habits over a much longer period (6-9 months) instead of the relatively short duration of the more traditional stomach content analysis.

Hopefully between the stomach analysis and stable isotope analysis we can determine whether Utah chubs are or are not competing for the same food resources with trout and ultimately assist us in trying to better manage the fishery Henrys Lake. Results from the 2014 diet studies should be the most comprehensive look at foraging behavior in Henrys we've ever done.

Links to prior stomach analysis reports can be found in the Fisheries Technical Reports section of the IDFG website. There is a report from 2004 as well as 2010.

Enforcement

Doug Petersen, IDFG Regional Conservation Officer

Enforcement effort was increased considerably this summer on Henrys Lake. Patrols were organized starting with the season opener with officers patrolling 3 times a week on Henrys Lake. Patrols were randomly spaced between weekends and weekdays. The goal was to increase Fish and Game officer presence on the lake, to detect violations, and to foster a relationship with the folks who fish Henrys. Officers patrolled by boat, vehicle and foot. We put nearly 200 more hours into patrolling the lake this year than we have in the past. However, violations did not seem to increase with more officer presence. Similar to most years, compliance with fishing rules on Henrys Lake is very high, with the vast majority of anglers following the rules. Officers are gearing up to begin patrolling the ice fishery once it develops this November, and will aggressively patrol the lake unit it closes on January 1.

Fishing Report

Ron Slocum, past HLF President

2014 – A very different year!

Fly fishing started very strong in the area of the cliffs in 11-15 feet of water and in fact the cliff area was productive the entire season. As usual, Targhee Creek cranked up as the water temporarily rose toward 70 degrees with fishing excellent for the entire month of July. The weather however dropped in early August (worst August I can remember in the last 40 years). The fish left Targhee for the rest of the summer. Fall fishing was sporadic for August and September and into October.

Hatches – very poor for mayflies and very little surface activity.

Damsel flies – they have returned in very good numbers all over the lake.

Caddis – as usual Targhee Creek was good for 45 days or more (6/15 - 8/1).

Midges – very consistent all season.

Fish Condition – very much improved over 2013. Lots of 16-19" cutts and hybrids in the 2.5 - 3 lb class. But – again in the absence of large hybrids with stories of large hybrids almost non-existent. One of my good friends and I released almost 1,000 fish for the season with only 2 fish over 6 lbs!

Flies – black leeches, pheasant tails, caddis nymphs and zebra midge patterns made up 90% of my successful fishing. **Bright spot** – Scuds – appear to be returning to some extent. Keep your fingers crossed. I have seen hardly any for 2 years.

Sad story – Staley Springs was the worst fishing I have experienced in 40 years! The first week of June in 2 days I released 21 nice fish but that was the last fish I caught at Staley's for the rest of the season. What happened???? **In summary** – the fish were in better shape this year. They were scattered the whole season. One day you find a group in 9 feet of water, the next day a group in 4 feet of water and even a group in 18 feet of water.

Invasive Species Update

Bryce Fowler, Fremont County Weed Control Supervisor

This year we inspected 7,400 boats at the highways and 1,000 dockside. This year aquatic plants were not moving around as much as last year due to the dry winter and spring. I think next year will be another booming year for aquatic plants due to all the late rain and moisture that we have received. So next year PLEASE INSPECT AND CLEAN YOUR BOAT after every use, and look at it when you pull it out of the water making sure that there is no vegetation on it. This year we also joined a new campaign for cleaning equipment: PLAY CLEAN GO. The nice thing about this campaign is that it covers both terrestrial and aquatic species. Once again, Henrys Lake stands out as the last lake in Idaho that is still free of any invasive species thanks to everyone's efforts. Throughout the state, 13 boats were caught with mussels attached to them. With other states such as Wyoming, Oregon, Washington and Montana having boat inspections on the highways, it's helped catch boats before they reach Idaho. The threat from Utah and Nevada remains and now the Dakotas are seeing more problems with everyone going to the oil fields. It has made us look even harder. On a good note in Lake Winnipeg, Canada, they are having good success with a new chemical to treat mussels that is not impacting their aquatic ecosystem. In our neck of the woods, IT IS UP TO US TO KEEP THE FIGHT ON. Fremont County Weed Control crews were out on the lake again doing plant surveys. We surveyed 350 points across the Henrys Lake and we can proudly say that Henrys is invasive and noxious weed FREE. It is the only lake across the state that we can say that.

Next year's boat inspections are expected to remain the same as far as I know. This is a good thing since recreationists have come to expect boat inspections and with the amount of invasive species coming in we think that is going to be the way to keep Henrys Lake clean.

On the terrestrial noxious weed control side of things, the work goes on. This year we treated 800 acres of noxious weeds surrounding Henrys Lake. This includes private and public lands. Next year we hope to continue to have a lot of projects that involve homeowner associations that will greatly reduce the amount of weeds around the lake.

Once again THANK YOU for all your support and help. And remember we are here to help. If you have any questions please call. Office: 208-624-7442, Cell: 208-709-2181.

Butch Oldenkamp

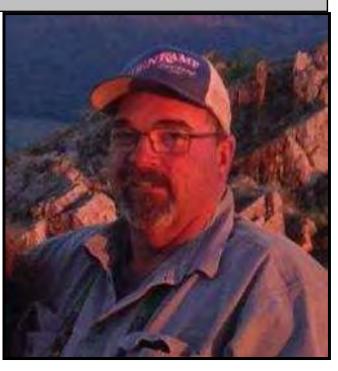
February 05, 1959 — August 14, 2014

On a very sad note we lost life member Butch Oldenkamp this summer. He was a great supporter of our organization and will be truly missed. May he rest in peace.

Obituary as printed in the Bakersfield Californian August 19, 2014:

Harold "Butch" Oldenkamp, 55, of Bakersfield, California, went to be with his Lord and Savior on August 14, 2014, in his cabin on the shore of Henry's Lake in Island Park, Idaho, of natural causes.

He was born February 5, 1959, in Corona, California to Harold and Beppy Oldenkamp. He was raised in Ontario, California where he attended Ontario Christian School. In 1979, he moved to Jerome, Idaho to help a friend establish a dairy. He went on to haul and buck hay, which he did for many years. In 1981, he returned to California to marry the



love of his life, Dana Pinheiro. They were married on October 1, 1982, in Norco, California. They were blessed with three wonderful children, Danielle, John and Nathan. He felt blessed when his family doubled with the additions of Brad, Katie and Jessica. He and Dana worked hard and started their own company, Oldenkamp Trucking, transporting milk in Ontario, California, in 1993. They moved and expanded the business to Bakersfield in 2005.

Always the avid hunter and fisherman, he and Dana reconnected with the area they loved and purchased a cabin on Henry's Lake.

He loved his family dearly and enjoyed spending time with friends both old and new. He was loved and will be so missed.

He is survived by his wife, Dana of Bakersfield; children, Danielle and Brad Bachar of Sacramento, CA, John and Katie Oldenkamp and Nathan Oldenkamp of Bakersfield; three grandchildren Brooke, Roxanne and Jeremiah all of Bakersfield; his father Harold Oldenkamp of Ontario; a sister Lorraine Feenstra and her family of Hesperia, CA; and a brother Bruce Oldenkamp and family also of Hesperia. He was preceded in death by his mother, Beppy and a dear sister, Julie Ann Oldenkamp.

A Celebration of Life was held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 23, at Laurelglen Bible Church, 2801 Ashe Road, Bakersfield, CA 93309, with Pastor Eric Burns officiating. Memorial contributions can be made in memory of Butch to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

2015 Annual Picnic and Fundraiser

When: Friday July 3rd 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Location: Henrys Lake State Park – tent will be set up near in the day use area near the big parking lot past

the boat ramp

Menu: Hamburgers, hotdogs, baked beans, potato salad, sodas and water

Auction items: Not sure at this time but probably only a few items since there are currently no plans to solicit any local merchants for contributions. Donations from members are of course welcome but please let us know

several weeks in advance. Thank you.

Cost: \$5 per adult, \$2 per child- cash only please.

Annual Election

Officers of the Henry's Lake Foundation are elected annually. Officers also serve as directors. Please vote your approval with a checkmark on the line next to the officer's and director's names on the included ballot card. Directors are re-elected upon expiration of their 3-year term. New directors are nominated and vetted by the Board prior to each election. If you have any nominations we would love to have them!

2013-14 Donor Honor Roll—Thank you for your generosity! (Since publication of 2013 Fall Newsletter)		
Donations \$500+ John A Herritt Bill and Carrol Albano Don and Frances Jordan	George and Margaret Lang Richard and Lynne Hodge Bob and Pat Mielbrecht Frank and Marilyn Moore	Todd Eason JoAnne Green George and Susan Tamborini Parmer Van Fleet
Donations \$200+ Roger and Sue Lang Edmond Given Donations \$100+	Leslie Dean Rickerd John Rohmer Tom and Becky Schell Don Simon Doris B Townsend James B. Wood Kathy L. Wright Carl Yates Donations \$50+	Eva Barker Carl F Blanchi Doug and Marilyn Cornett Patricia Huber Bill Lloyd Patricia O'Neall Mark Roberts Widow Ladies "CFTL" Nazaren Church
James Aho Rex Bigler Phillip Burleigh Mary Dimke John G Esch		
Martin J. Landholm		

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