

The Barbless Hook

November 2023

Edited by Mark Spruiell



tri-valleyflyfishers.org

November Meeting – Wednesday Nov. 1st, 7pm

Yellowstone – A Tale of Three Trips

Join us to learn about this summer's Yellowstone Cutthroat Conservation trip that was taken by six members of TVFF over 19 days. We will focus on the objectives, process and results of the conservation project for native Yellowstone Cutthroat trout and fishing amongst herds of bison in the Park.

This trip was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to fish terrific waters in Yellowstone National Park, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Utah, and to also attempt the Wyoming Cutt Slam for four separate species. The challenges of wildlife in the Park, weather, car issues and tough fishing combine for an unforgettable story you won't want to miss. Oh, and there will be lots of pictures and video for you to live and laugh along our 3,700 mile journey with us this past August.



New Member

TVFF welcomes Joel T. from Tracy to the club. We look forward to seeing you at a club meeting or outing soon!

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President's Corner

Marty Loomis

Some time back I wrote about how fly fishing can be a dangerous sport. From falling or slipping down hills, walking on bowling balls covered in snot, fast water, bushwacking, and the list goes just on in our quest for that ideal riffle or fishing hole. I wrote about the near drowning in the Diablo Valley Fly Club and there are so many others that are heard about across the country. Most recently, within our own club, we had two individuals who had a hard day fishing. One had to go to the hospital and have sutures in his elbow and the other who just had surgery on his shoulder to repair damage. Both were caused by slipping in either mud or loose rocks while fishing. All that can be said is, just be careful. Evaluate, use a wading staff, go with a buddy, all the things we always hear. Every morning I see the same grey haired old guy in the mirror and try to remember, the bones just don't bend like they used to.

Speaking of Diablo Valley Fly Fishers, they will be holding their 10th online Project Healing Waters (PHW) NorCal auction. As many of you know, PHW is a national program supporting injured and disabled veterans with the healing therapy of fly fishing. Proceeds support the PHW Martinez and San Francisco programs. Funding is used primarily for fishing trips: travel, meals, lodging, and guides (when used). PHW National provides fly tying and fishing gear, tying and casting contests, and other support.

As soon as it is available, a link and QR code will be sent out to TVFF members to the auction site. I encourage everyone to participate in this great cause.

How about a little trivia. In July 1969, John Fogerty of Creedence Clearwater Revival wrote a song called "Green River". John is a native of the bay area and spent a fair amount of time growing up on a river in Northern California. The song that he named "Green River" is actually "Putah Creek". Who would have guessed it?

November Special Raffle

Steve Johnson – Raffle Director

We will be raffling off an **Orvis Clearwater 6 wt., 9'0", 4 pc. fly rod** at the November meeting. This is an excellent rod that normally sells for \$290. It can be yours for only a \$10 ticket. Tickets will be sold at the monthly meetings through November or online at the [TVFF store](#).

2023 TVFF Board of Directors

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Raffle	Steve Johnson
Refreshments	Gary Prince
Speakers	Dave Fontaine
Trout in Classroom	Daniel Kitts
Webmaster	Mark Spruiell

Additional information on the rod follows.

Designed in Vermont with a focus on affordability that doesn't sacrifice quality and performance, Orvis' line of Clearwater Rods is ready for anything from tiny mountain brooks to a wide open flat. Made with a medium-fast action, the Clearwater offers solid feedback and casting presentation whether you're just starting out or have decades of fly fishing under your belt. Performance-driven, the Clearwater has enough power to launch large flies, handle gusts of wind, and make those lengthy casts at cruising fish. Whether you need a 2 weight for small panfish, a 4 weight for Euro nymphing, or a 12 weight to handle the tarpon of a lifetime, Orvis makes their Clearwater series in a range of different line weights and lengths to accommodate just about any fish you're chasing.

Blank – Made from high modulus graphite with a medium-fast action, the Clearwater blank makes for smooth and versatile casting. With its graphite core, you get a lightweight feel with this blank, while its medium-fast action provides instant feedback so that you can feel every flex this rod makes. The Clearwater Rod also comes with a clean black finish. This blank has a timeless look and brings just enough stealth whether you're pursuing tough trout or bonefish in a shallow channel.

Guides – For their Clearwater series, Orvis outfits each rod with chrome snake and stripper guides with ceramic inserts. With the chrome outer, you get excellent durability without excess weight, and a ceramic insert ensures that every cast you make is shooting nice and smoothly.

Reel Seat – A versatile reel seat that lets you rest easy knowing that your reel is always secure, Orvis' Clearwater Rods have a black nickel aluminum reel seat. With the aluminum composition, this seat is nice and light while resisting corrosion, and its black nickel finish offers additional stealth for those spooky fish that get put down over any reflection of light.

Rod Tube – Safe and sound is exactly how your rods should rest when you're not using them, and Orvis outfits their Clearwater series with a solid rod tube. This tube will protect your Clearwater whether you're flying to a different country or just drop it on the ground early in the morning before you've had your coffee.

Warranty – As of July 2022, Orvis' Clearwater Fly Rods are backed by their 25-Year Guarantee. This is a straightforward and excellent warranty that lasts for 25 years. It doesn't matter whether you slam it in a door, step on it, or you encounter a manufacturer defect, Orvis will repair or replace your rod. If the rod can't be repaired and it's out of production, Orvis will choose a newer model of at least equal value.

Alameda Creek Alliance Fundraiser

Marty Loomis

TVFF is selling T-shirts for Alameda Creek Alliance. Several members purchased them last month during Steve Cochrane's presentation. We will have one for people to look at and order during November's club meeting. Bring your name, size and \$20 and you too can have one. See below – it's a good-looking shirt.



Outings and Activities

Mitchie McCammon – Outings Director

Upcoming Outings

Feather River Steelhead Trip – Alan Wyonsnick, Fishmeister - This coming season we are going to change from a walk and wade outing to using a drift boat. The heavy rains and releases from Oroville dam have had a negative impact on the stretch of river where we have had our outings in the past four years. Unfortunately, the areas that were most productive and provided easy to moderate level wading have been filled in with gravel resulting in less spots to fish and requiring more challenging wading.

We have made a discounted-price arrangement with an experienced guide on the Feather River for multiple days in October, November and December. The cost is \$175 per person, and he will take you in a 2-angler drift boat on various sections of the Feather between Oroville and Gridley. These will be one day up and back trips. Based on this very favorable pricing you will have to bring your own lunch and assist with shuttling. He can

provide rods and flies if you need them. We also recommend you bring your waders if you have them, as it may be advantageous to get out of the boat a few times to more thoroughly fish some riffle spots.

The following dates are still available: 11/15, 11/28, 12/5, 12/12 and 12/19. Sign up on the TVFF website. If the date you want shows that it is filled, please sign up on the waitlist in the event someone cancels. You can sign up as a single person and we can pair you up with someone or contact Alan if you have another person you want to go with.

Fall/Winter Striper Trip – November 9th – Martin Plotkin, Fishmeister – Fish from your own float tube, pontoon, or other watercraft. You will launch at the at Tracy Oasis Marina at 7:30 and fish Grant Line Canal and Fabian and Bill Canal, meeting up for lunch back at the marina. Arrangements for possible carpooling to be made with the attendees.

Yuba River Annual BBQ – Rob Farris, Fishmeister – Last year it was canceled due to weather, but this year it's back! Mark your calendars for February 24 and 25, 2024. Watch your email for more details and sign ups coming soon!

Fly Tying Get Together

Jim Broadbent

For this month's Get Together we will be tying the Buzzer Midge pattern and talking about places to fish in the winter months. If you are not yet one of the gifted who's tying your own flies, drop on in and get inspired (I'll bring a couple of extra vices and tools). Have you got a go-to winter water to fish in the cold winter months? Spill the beans and share.

We'll see you at the clubhouse on Wednesday November 8th at 7pm.

Buzzer Materials:

- Hook – 12-14 Curved hook Tiemco 200, Long shank nymph, Caddis pupa hook
- Body – Tying thread 6/0 color of your choice, stripped peacock herl, floss, flashabou
- Rib – Wire, fine flashabou, 3/0 thread
- Cheeks – Goose biot, medium flashabou, yarn, lighter or darker than your thread
- Coating – Clear fingernail polish, UV resin in thin or thick



Member Reports

Mike Freitas

Meiss Meadow

My wife and I headed to Jackson Rancheria campground for an Airstream rally. There was not a whole lot for me to do since I do not gamble so it was good that I brought my fly rod. I decided to head up to the Upper Truckee River at Meiss Meadow and try my luck catching a Lahontan cutthroat. After the three-mile hike out to the meadow I was rewarded with the sight of fish in the water. The first hour of fishing was tough because the fish were spooky and the small stream was covered in thickets with branches everywhere. Fortunately I was able to find a few open spots and a few willing cutthroats. This was the first heritage trout I caught and documented since taking Rob's Heritage Trout Challenge class.

Feather River

After returning from Jackson on Sunday I decided to check my email. Luckily for me an opening popped up to drift the Feather River on Tuesday. Alan Wyosnick and I carpoled to the boat launch near the Thermalito Afterbay and met with our guide Steve Acosta. After a quick shuttling of cars we were in the boat and fishing. I hooked up and landed my first steelhead within the first fifteen minutes of fishing. I got a picture of that first fish to add to my collection for the heritage trout challenge. Little did I know that this was going to be an epic day. Between me and Alan we hooked up with thirty-two fish and landed twenty-two of them. Hopefully the rest of the club trips will have similar luck.



As a side note I did find an interesting [YouTube video](#) from Red's Fly Shop. The video is called Dry Fly School, but the section on mending was really informative.

Rob Farris

Butter Bellies, Spawning Colors and Changing Fall Landscapes

What a great time of year to capture the essence of fall, and hunt for a few more big guys before the cold sets in and drives you to the Steeles. So we're off on a scouting trip for the Outings Director to the seldom fished Clavey River, followed by Cherry Creek, and a camping night in the high redwoods close to Yosemite. The smallish Cherry Creek fishes great the first day for hungry and smallish eager rainbows. And not a soul on the creek for well sought after peace and serenity. But be forewarned as the Cherry Lake Road from Groveland is closed (past fire damage) so the only entrance is via Tuolumne City.



On to the Eastern Sierras and experiencing the greatly anticipated fall colors in the high mountain streams around Mammoth. Be aware that most campgrounds there closed on October 15th so you need to search out alternatives this time of year, such as a serviceable BLM site at Crowley Lake Campground for \$5/night. That'll make up for the \$7.35/gallon gas in Mammoth; maybe... likely not.

Hot Creek's waters never seem to change (over my 35 years fishing it) with good clear flow and your choice of fishing the Interpretive Center or the canyon for VERY well educated fish after a summer of intense Southern California interlopers. And almost no one on the stream, thanks to the warden's arrival and enforcement of anti-poaching activity. Hot Creek has more 11,000 fish per mile, so the fish are definitely there. But this is highly technical fishing requiring your very best skills. We're into a few quality rainbows around 10-12" and

are sight fishing to much larger 16-18" fish right at our feet and more big guys on the bottom of pools. But they are overly picky, so we move over to the Upper Owens for the sunset hatch of very small grey midges and an occasional tiny BWO. A nice caddis hatch develops late as well and we cycle through small midges, midge emergers, BWO emergers, and late year caddis (a la White Millers).



The Upper Owens at sunset was stunning watching the sun set behind Mammoth Mountain as usual. More fishing activity than at Hot Creek, but it was still quiet and meandering, with a constant rising of fish to the ultra-small (#22 & 24) midges, of course. Also known for its 11,000 fish per mile populations, we had better success in the river bends and undercuts with several fish caught on the BWO emerger and a decent 17" Brownie "Butter Belly" on a doctored caddis (cut back wings and hackle for the win!).

A quick trip was taken up the hill to see gorgeous Convict Lake with stunning foliage. It's definitely on my agenda for a lake trip next year. The Aspens changing everywhere with yellow dominating all of the east side slopes up through Yosemite.

The final stop was in Tuolumne Meadows where last year's heavy snows sank all the roofs and destroyed every existing building and the visitor center. However, in the shallow river the fishing was fast and furious. Over 20 fish in three hours with rainbows, browns, and a couple of stunning fall color Brookies. A #16 & 18 Purple Haze attractor was the ticket for the non-stop action. Smaller fish for sure with a 11" beautifully colored Brookie that was the largest, but so much fun. And not a soul in sight either, except the deer. So another gorgeous day of fall fishing closes out the high mountains for the year. Snow quickly followed us and came into the high country this week.



Bob McCollum

Did a little foothills bass fishing today. The lake is 0.6 mile walk in. I used to carry my float tube in with shoulder straps. I bought a kayak cart and made a handle from ABS pipe. Worked great.





Fished the Silver Fork of the American. Beautiful stream. Caught a few fish mostly on dry flies.



A buddy and I fished Heenan Lake yesterday. We each caught one fish. The weather was beautiful, but the catching not so much. No one was really killing it. A few people we talk to caught one fish as well.



Tom Olinger

I managed to get out some in October when my wife was in Europe visiting an old friend from our time living there (plus another time or two).

I fished Webber Lake one day in early October. Weather was nasty, cold with snow flurries early and rain later in the day. I ended up catching five, all LCT's in the 12-17" range (see picture). I had no luck in shallow water but found fish past the drop off in about 15-20' of water and caught them all pulling a thin mint wooly bugger on a fast sinking line. I've fished this lake 2-3 times this year, my first outings there, and I think it's an underappreciated lake. I enjoy catching a variety of rainbows, brookies, and LCT's there.

A second attempt to fish Webber with two other guys fell apart due to high wind so we moved on to Milton Reservoir where the fishing was slow. I landed three small browns pulling an olive leech on a sinking line.

I had the chance to fish Pyramid Lake one day; it's a place I've only been to once or twice and know little about. Fortunately, I was able to go with an experienced Pyramid fisher. We "jigged" in water about 15-35' and found fish around 25'. I caught two, including a 4-5 lb LCT, on a balanced tui chub baitfish pattern (see picture). My experienced friend landed 8, two other guys fishing with us landed one each.

I fished Lake Davis twice. The first day I fished Camp 5 area and landed four ~14-15" rainbows, recent planters. No larger holdover fish you hope/expect to find at Davis. I had little luck in shallow water and found the fish I caught in 10-15' of water using a type 3 sinking line and a variety of buggers/wiggle tails. The second trip, a week later, was a bust. I fished three days, at Fairview Point, Camp 5, and Jenkins Point, for no fish landed, one other hooked/lost, and a few bumps. Hard to figure out what happened; my best guess is a warm weather front that week put the bite off. We marked lots of fish but couldn't buy a bite.

I fished the Truckee one day for about 2.5 hours in the morning, the Glenshire Drive stretch. I Euronymphed and indicator nymphed for one ~14' rainbow and two mountain whitefish, the first whitefish I've caught on the Truckee. All fish were taken on a small ~#18/20 olive WD 40.



Ken Tetzl

I fished the Middle Fork of the Stanislaus yesterday. Did okay too. Caught 10 or 11 with two 16" browns and a couple 14" rainbows. The rest were 10-12" mix of browns and rainbows. Mostly top water with a 16 CDC paradun being most effective. It was a weird day however, with rain and the Forest Service setting control-burn fires. I did get to warm up by a couple fires however, which made the day kinda nice. Pretty cold out there!!

Gear Review – Boomerang SNIP Line Cutter

Bob McCollum

Fishing line nippers should be a simple and necessary fishing tool. As with many aspects of fly fishing, even simple gear can quickly become complicated and expensive. Line cutters run the spectrum from simple fingernail clippers costing only a few dollars to highly engineered, anodized, and engraved devices costing more than \$300.

I've used a Simms nipper that I won in a club raffle for many years. They work well for light leaders and tippet but are poorly suited to cutting heavier line.

Recently, a guide showed me a novel line cutting device - the Boomerang SNIP - which functions like miniature scissors. The SNIP line cutter features stainless steel blades with integrated safety lock that can easily cut mono, flouro, and braided lines. A strong, 36-inch retractable tether with mini carabiner is also included. Several models are available with small, big, or long blades, as well as a magnifying lens and LED light. List prices run \$12-\$25 which are discounted on Amazon.



Check out the Boomerang SNIP if you need a strong, versatile, and affordable line cutter.

Alameda Creek Alliance Field Training – November 5

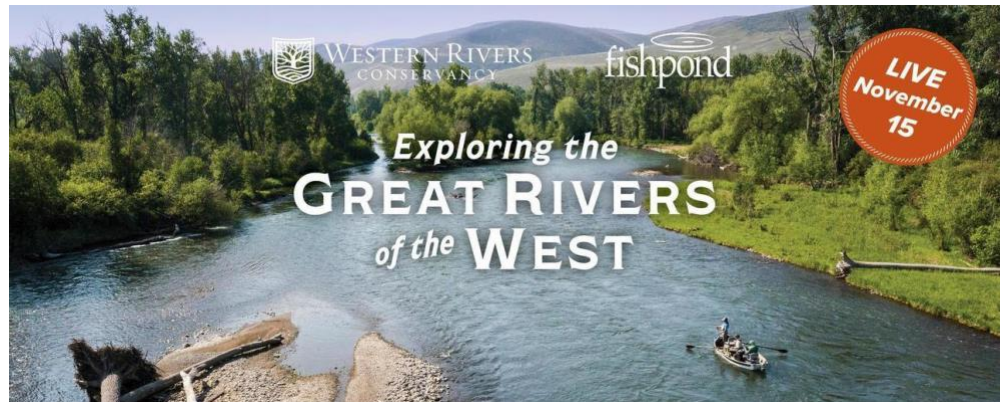
Join Alameda Creek Alliance Volunteer Coordinator Steven Cochrane for an observation training at Alameda Creek. We will meet at the BART crossing on the Alameda Creek Trail from 930-1130 on Sunday November 5, 2023. Questions? Contact Steven at Steven@AlamedaCreek.org. Running late? We will be at the meeting site for the first hour. Park at Rancho Arroyo Park, Montecito Drive, Nilas/Fremont and walk 10 minutes to meeting site.

NOTE: Southbound 680 is closed that weekend between 580/680 and 84. Traffic may be heavy so plan accordingly.

Western Rivers Conservancy Event – November 15

A Special Evening with Sue Doroff and Tom Rosenbauer

Please join us on November 15 at the Presidio Officers' Club for a very special evening with Sue Doroff and Tom Rosenbauer, who will sit down for a one-on-one conversation about river conservation and the mechanics behind WRC's motto, "Sometimes to save a river, you have to buy it."



Tom, who is one of the country's best-known fly fishing authors and the host of the Orvis Fly Fishing Guide podcast, will interview Sue about her 35-year career as Western Rivers Conservancy's cofounder and president. They will cover everything from WRC's innovative strategies for putting water in-stream, to its pioneering approaches to funding land acquisitions, to the importance of creating public access to rivers for all.

The conversation will take place in front of a live audience and be livestreamed on WRC's website for a national viewership. Registration for the virtual livestream will open next week, but tickets to the in-person event at the Presidio Officers' Club can be [purchased now!](#)

This special event will be an opportunity to hear directly from Sue about the impactful conservation work that WRC has done across the American West over the last 35 years. The discussion will wrap up with an audience Q&A.

The evening will begin with an introduction by Fishpond founder and CEO Johnny Le Coq, setting the stage for an enriching conversation between Sue and Tom.

When: Wednesday, November 15, 5-8pm Pacific Time. Doors open at 5pm. Program begins at 6pm. No late seating.

Where: The Presidio Officers' Club.

Tickets: \$75

Enter to Win: Everyone who attends the event will automatically be entered in a drawing to win prizes from Fishpond, Orvis, Sage, onX, NRS and others.

Hors d'oeuvres and beverages will be served.

Dam Bypass to Help Pyramid Lake Fish

Looking down from the top of a cliff, you can hear the crashing sounds of water as the Truckee River falls over the Numana Dam, an irrigation diversion built in 1917. Under the water, from the perspective of the endangered cui-ui, a large sucker fish endemic to Pyramid Lake, the concrete barrier poses a generational challenge, severing the fish from key spawning ground.

Standing near that cliff, with the dam in the flatlands below, officials broke ground this month on a project to aid fish access to spawning areas upstream, one step in a decades-long recovery effort by the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, whose name is *Cui-ui Ticutta*, or “cui-ui eaters.” For the first time in a century, the fish passage will help open up 65 miles of river for cui-ui migration.

The tribe has long worked to secure funding for the project, and received nearly \$8.3 million from the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to build a rock ramp at Numana Dam. Such ramps are built to emulate the natural river and give fish a path to swim past diversions. It will also aid spawning of the Lahontan cutthroat trout, a fish also interwoven with the tribe’s history.

“The project will expand and improve the spawning habitat available for the fish species that are critically important to the tribe’s culture, economics and trust resource,” said James Phoenix, chairman of the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, during remarks at a ceremonial groundbreaking.

The endangered cui-ui and threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout rely on specific conditions to reach their historic spawning grounds in parts of the Truckee River upstream of Pyramid Lake. But a century of man-made diversions and dams on the river have crippled habitat for the fish.



Beginning in the early 1900s, not long after Congress passed the Newlands Reclamation Act of 1902 — named for Nevada Sen. Francis Newlands — federal officials began pursuing the construction of a major irrigation

project on the river. The resulting project, also named for Newlands, diverted part of the river’s flows at Derby Dam to irrigated fields in the Fallon area.

The Newlands Project vastly shrunk spawning habitat for both fish species. Lahontan cutthroat trout, before the construction of Derby Dam, could migrate 100 miles up the river to Lake Tahoe and tributaries flowing into the Truckee watershed. But the dam’s presence blocked trout from moving past it. The reduced flows and changing hydrology created additional barriers for the movement of cui-ui, with increased erosion, sediment issues and the formation of a larger delta.

At the time that water rights were determined on the Truckee River, the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe received water rights for irrigation. But despite the cultural and spiritual importance of fish species, the tribe did not receive sufficient water to keep the lake stable or maintain a thriving environment for cui-ui and Lahontan cutthroat trout. Decades later, in the early 1980s, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected the federal government and tribe’s claims to reassert this water claim.

However, through decades of litigation, agreements and settlements, the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe has effectively advocated to bring more water to the lake, restore habitat upstream and work to recover the two imperiled species through its fisheries program.

Though only five of 71 Lahontan cutthroat trout populations are considered resilient, according to a recent report, some of the most stable populations are managed by the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe and Summit Lake Paiute Tribe, as the [Nevada Current reported earlier this year](#).

The \$8.3 million fish passage project at Numana Dam — about 15 miles from the lake on tribal land — falls into that effort. Similar to Derby Dam, it is a barrier to the natural migration of fish.

“I believe this is the single largest project we have funded in the last couple of years,” Deputy U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Siva Sundaresan said after the event, referring to the fish passage. “Most other projects range from a few \$100,000 to sometimes a couple of million.”

Under the current design for the Numana Dam, large numbers of cui-ui are unable to pass at the same time. Lisa Heki, project leader for Lahontan National Fish Hatchery complex with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said the new rock ramp will be designed specifically for “cui-ui swimming capacity and speed.” The ramp will provide cascading steps for the fish to cross.

“This is an important watershed connectivity point,” Heki said.

The next barriers for fish sit 65 miles upstream near the California border. These structures are used by the Truckee Meadows Water Authority — the municipal purveyor for Reno and Sparks — but Heki said “there are some retrofit designs and planning already in place” to improve fish passage.



Upstream habitat is especially important for Lahontan cutthroat trout's migration, she said, noting that fish populations in Pyramid Lake and Lake Tahoe were historically connected.

"There was genetic exchange" between the trout, she said. "That's critically important. So those perennial waters up in the Sierras will be important spawning and rearing habitat into the future."

Phoenix said there is still more work to be done to restore habitat. He stressed the importance of upstream and downstream restoration that improves riparian areas along the Truckee River's banks.

"A lot of the dirt keeps coming in, the sediment keeps coming in," Phoenix told reporters after the event. "We're trying to restore that so we keep the banks open and the water flowing."

The Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe continues to pursue legal claims to bring more water to the lake, restoring inflows that were cut off by the Newlands Project. Earlier this year, the tribe sued the federal government, alleging that it breached a settlement agreement to transfer water once used by the Fallon Naval Air Station back to the lake. Phoenix did not comment on the litigation.

In a legal complaint filed in July, attorneys for the tribe wrote that "today, the preservation of the cui-ui and Lahontan cutthroat trout, and Pyramid Lake generally, continues to depend primarily on the maintenance of sufficient flows of water in the Truckee River and ultimately into the lake."

Items for Sale

If you need contact information for a member, use the club's online [roster](#).

Gary Turri

Rods for Sale (New Condition in Tubes):

- Redington Classic Trout 8.5 foot 4 weight \$100
- Redington RS3 9 foot 10 weight 2 piece \$100
- TFO Blitz 9 foot 8 weight \$250

Two Hand Spey Rods:

- TFO Deer Creek 12'6" 5/6 \$230
- TFO Deer Creek 13 foot 6/7 weight \$230
- Echo Dec Hogan 2 13' 7 weight \$230

Fly Lines for sale (New in Box and 50% off):

- Cortland Trout Boss Double Taper DT-6 \$50
- RIO Single Hand Spey WF6-F \$50
- SA Spey Lite Scandi Integrated 240 grain \$50

Bob McCollum

Crestliner 14 foot aluminum boat. With trailer and Mariner 2-stroke motor. Good condition. Three swivel seats. Partial wooden deck with new carpet. Engine tuned. Transom rebuilt. Trailer rewired. Lots of extras. \$950/OBO

