

# CHICO AREA FLYFISHERS'

short casts

Nov 2003



## THE LINE

Eric See, CAF President

When I began as CAF president last year, I really wasn't sure of what I was doing...guess that hasn't changed much, but it has been a lot of fun. From watching the Annual Dinner come together, to the wonderful programs that we've had at the Monthly Meetings, to the many new faces that I met over the year, it has been a great experience. Our little club has a tremendous wealth of flyfishing knowledge, experience, history, and conservation ethics and I've been proud to be a part of that. I began last year with encouraging everyone to get out and fish, and it would be appropriate to do the same now. I unfortunately have not been following my own advice lately, waaaay too many irons in the fire. I hope to remedy that in November, which should coincide with the change of seasons which abruptly occurred last week. Everyone I've talked to has told me that the Feather River steelhead are bigger this year, I need to stop talking about it and find out for myself. As the inscription on my fly rod reads, "It's the Wet Fly That Fishes".

On to CAF business. One of those hot irons has been the State Fishing Regulations proceedings. As mentioned in our previous newsletter, CAF sent two letters regarding this subject (they are both on our Website); one was our proposal to re-open Big Chico Creek upstream of Bear Hole to a reasonable fishing season: October 15 to May 31 with catch and release/barbless hooks, the other was opposition to the drastic changes for the Feather River that the Department of Fish and Game had proposed. Jim Gaumer and myself attended the October 3, 2003 Fish and Game Commission meeting in Redding and provided oral testimony regarding these issues, and several other members of the public were also there to oppose the Feather River changes. In addition Allen Hawthorne was there to promote an increased fishing season on Butte Creek.

The result was that we were successful with the Feather River issue, DFG has decided to amend its proposals to a more reasonable approach. CAF's quick and well-reasoned response certainly had a big effect, not only did CAF send a letter, but so did several individual CAF members, and the local media coverage of this issue (and CAF's response) was also a big factor. Thanks to all of you who sent letters! These activities really took some effort, but the process worked and we will be able to continue next year to pursue salmon, steelhead, and trout during the spring and summer. Things will be more regulated, but the barbless hook/catch and release angler won't notice much difference. Here are the main aspects of their proposals: 1) Instead of closing the entire river to salmon fishing until August 1, they have decided to keep the season open with a reduced bag limit of 1 salmon until July 15, then it will jump up to a 3-fish limit; 2) Instead of closing down the section upstream of Hwy 70 to a 2-month Jan-Feb season, this section will be open from Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> through July 15<sup>th</sup>; 3) Instead of October 15<sup>th</sup> being the start date for the salmon closure (zero bag limit) in the High Flow section, it will now be October 1<sup>st</sup> and will extend to 5 miles below Live Oak; 4) They also have decided to NOT increase the limit on steelhead from 1 fish to 2 fish as was originally proposed. These regulations seem much more reasonable, although there really isn't any data that supports them. The Feather River supports high numbers of salmon, even the early "spring run" salmon that come in from April through June. However, at least these regulations allow the sport fishery to continue while making the attempt at applying protective regulations for species that wear the label of "threatened." I personally do not agree with this approach, but DFG has to contend with the Federal Endangered Species Act regulators that have demanded protective regulations, even if they don't always make sense. If you have any specific questions about these new rules, please attend the November meeting and we will discuss the issue further.

Regarding Big Chico Creek, it does not look very promising. DFG recommended against our proposal, strangely however, they did not provide any reasons why. They simply stated that the current 90-day season provides adequate protection for spring-run salmon, but they did not provide any data or discussion as to why a barbless hook/catch and re-

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### **FLY TYING – Nov??**

There has been a very small number of participants for the fly tying sessions. There is no fly tying this month while the Board re-evaluates the issue. If you want the fly tying to continue, Contact Eric See (Last month Eric received one call)

November General Meeting and Elections – The Nature Conservancy meeting room (500 Broadway, next to Jack's Diner) at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, November 12th.

Speaker – The speaker is going to be Eric Petlock, avid kayaker, flyfisher, hunter and general outdoorsman, who will discuss the Whitewater Flows issue from the whitewater boater perspective.

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### Calendar of Events

Gen. Mtg. - Nov 12, 7:30 PM

Fish-Out - Nov 15

Fly Tying - On Hold

### NEWSLETTER

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Dawit Zeleke.....897-6373

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lease fishery does not also provide adequate protection for spring run. That's what they do on Deer Creek, Mill Creek, Antelope Creek, and Battle Creek, as well as the Sacramento River (which also has winter run salmon, an endangered species), Yuba River, and many other streams with spring run salmon. Why the special restrictions on Big Chico Creek? The same could be said for Butte Creek, which was combined with Big Chico on this 90-Day winter season approach. CAF will continue its attempts at applying a reasonable approach to the management of these waters, where decisions will be based on sound science and will respect fishing as a Public Trust resource. All the while providing protection for the spring run Chinook salmon like on so many other streams in the State.

## it's election time!

It's election time, we need to elect new officers and board members, here are the candidates (voting will take place at the November Meeting).

President: Dana Miller

Vice President: John (Chico Fly Shop)

Secretary: ??????

Treasurer: Dennis Boyd

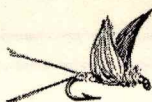
Director: Steve Bohnmeyer

They will join the rest of the Board consisting of Eric See (Past President), Val Bowlby (Director), Ron Leger (Director), Ed Bruno (Director)

Big Chico Creek Fishout - Nov 15 - If interested contact Eric. Space will be limited.

### FISHOUT SCHEDULE

Oct 11	Eagle Lake
Oct 25	Bass Lake Madera County - Bass
Nov 15	Big Chico Creek





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