



January 2011

## Fremont County Commission Adopts Waterways Ordinance

After many months and a huge volume of public input (including a concerted effort by the Henry's Fork Foundation), the Fremont County Commission voted to adopt a Waterways Ordinance to regulate the use of motors on moving waters in Fremont County. The ordinance was not everything that we hoped and worked for, but it was far better than some of the potential worst-case scenarios that had concerned us (and been openly discussed) over the past year. Here is a synopsis of the ordinance:

### Positive:

The ordinance protects the Henry's Fork from the Mack's Inn Bridge to Vernon Bridge – about 55 miles of river, including the Box Canyon, Harriman State Park, Mesa Falls to Ashton, and the critical stretch between Ashton Dam and Vernon Bridge – from all motorized use.

The ordinance protects all Henry's Fork tributaries, and all running waters outside those on the mainstem Henry's Fork on which motors are specifically allowed, from all motorized use.

The ordinance bans jet watercraft and personal watercraft (jet skis) from all running waters in the County.

### Negative:

The ordinance allows 15 horsepower motors above the Mack's Inn Bridge (an existing use), and allows them from Vernon Bridge downstream to the Independent Canal diversion (near the St. Anthony cemetery below town), with the exception of a ban on motors on the Fun Farm backwater.

The ordinance allows for unrestricted horsepower use downstream of the Independent Canal diversion.



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Trying to balance the good and the bad, the first thing to note is the fact that this is a major improvement over the status quo, in which only a random selection of short sections of river were protected (readers should remember that although virtually everyone thought that no motors were allowed on the Henry's Fork and other streams, this was not, in fact, the case – which is why the question of a waterways ordinance was raised in the first place). In addition, a long and important section of the mainstem Henry's Fork is protected. The ban on jet motors, and the complete protection of all tributaries, are conservation-oriented measures that are hugely important.

That said, the great failing of the ordinance is the fact that in spite of reason, much existing public access, the vast majority of public opinion, upset property owners, and very real conservation concerns from wildlife managers, the County chose to allow 15 horsepower motors between Vernon Bridge and the Fun Farm.

The Foundation worked hard to get this far, and we will continue to work to protect the sections of river that are still in need of it. In the meantime, there is plenty to be pleased – and relieved – about in the new ordinance.

## Salt Lake City Dinner and Auction

On Friday March 4, 2011 the Henry's Fork Foundation will hold its annual Salt Lake City dinner and auction from 6:30—9:30 P.M. at the Radisson Hotel in downtown Salt Lake City (215 West South Temple). The special guest will be keynote speaker Craig Mathews of Blue Ribbon Flies.

Attend the dinner and auction for \$25 per person or—better yet—buy a table of 8 for \$175 and bring your friends.

If you would like to donate an auction item, please contact Brady Taylor at 208-652-3567, or email him at [brady@henrysfork.org](mailto:brady@henrysfork.org).

See you in Salt Lake City!



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