



FALL 2001

HENRY'S FORK FOUNDATION

NEWSLETTER

Harriman State Park Master Plan

An Opportunity to Protect the Crown Jewel of the Henry's Fork

by Charlie Sperry, Director of Operations

I think we have all learned a hard lesson from Yosemite and to a lesser degree Yellowstone, and it is much better to give a reasonable number of people the advantages of parks rather than to let a host of people ruin the benefits for all. I quite agree that the Railroad Ranch serves unique opportunities which must be preserved at all costs if it is to accomplish the purposes that we have in mind.

— Roland Harriman, 1975 letter to Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation

The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) is preparing a Master Plan that will determine the future of Harriman State Park for years to come. The new Master Plan will replace the original General Operation and Development Plan that was authored by John Rutter of the IDPR in 1978. According to the Department, a Master Plan is a multi-purpose document that is used for long-range development, operation and fiscal planning. It forms the basis from which detailed plans and specifications for actual park development and operations are prepared. The Master Plan is based on input from the park and IDPR planning staff, local government, the community, special interest groups, adjacent landowners, and park customers.

How will the Master Plan affect Harriman State Park in the future? A Master Plan is intended to last 20 years, at which time a new plan is developed if funding is available for the process (there is currently a "waiting list" for parks needing new master plans). Assuming that the new plan will be in place for at least twenty years, it is safe to say that decisions we make today will have a significant impact for years to come.



The historic ranch buildings at Harriman State Park.

For obvious reasons the Master Plan is very important to the members of the Henry's Fork Foundation, or any other people who enjoy fishing Harriman's fabled waters, hiking in the backcountry, skiing on its trails, or observing its wealth of wildlife. This is our chance to make sure the park continues to offer all of the features for which we admire the park today.

In order to plan the future of Harriman State Park it is useful to examine its past. The history of Harriman makes it unique among parks in the State of Idaho. Prior to becoming the property of the State of Idaho, the park was a private retreat owned by the Harriman family of New York State. The Harriman's managed their ranch with a few basic interests in mind. They wanted a place to relax and enjoy the outdoors, a place to fly fish for wild trout and observe wildlife in their natural setting. They wanted to experience the Old West through cattle and horses. They found their dream in the Railroad Ranch.

In the year of 1961, when Roland and Averell Harriman were making decisions regarding the future of their magnificent heritage, they wanted to permanently provide a refuge for wildlife. They wanted their land to be a sanctuary for waterfowl and other species of birds. Like Theodore Roosevelt before them, the Harrimans foresaw the need to protect wild places, even before urban sprawl or subdivisions were a serious threat to the open spaces in eastern Idaho. Roland wrote that he and Averell gave the Idaho property "because we just could not face the prospect of its becoming nothing more than an uncontrolled real estate development with hot dog stands and cheap honky tonks, and because we could foresee the necessity for preserving such property for the enjoyment of future generations" (Reed and Petersen, 1991).*

In 1961 conservation choices were limited. This was before the popularity of conservation easements. It was before the time that groups such as The Nature Conservancy purchased properties like the Flat Ranch in eastern Idaho for the purpose of protecting natural resources. The Harriman family decided to entrust the State of Idaho with the future and care of their ranch, and their requests were clear: The State was to continue to manage the park, forever, as a refuge for wildlife, and as a sanctuary for birds. The Harrimans anticipated that when their land became a state park, people would cherish the opportunity to observe elk, moose, swans and other wild-

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The *Henry's Fork Foundation Newsletter* is published quarterly by the Henry's Fork Foundation. Articles, letters, opinions and photographs from the membership are welcomed. All correspondence should be directed to P.O. Box 550, Ashton, ID 83420, telephone number 208-652-3567, fax 208-652-3568.

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A Note From the Chair

Little more than a month has passed since we witnessed abominable events exceeding the imagination of decent people worldwide. To those of you who have inquired, I can only offer the cautious report that to date no information has been received as to any deaths or injuries affecting any of our 2000+ members.

The emotional haze through which we struggle to find our way is like the haze Milton described in *Paradise Lost*: "Not light, but rather darkness visible." Long-standing assumptions and long-held core values are being reexamined and reordered. What remains important? What has now become trivial? It would not surprise, in the aftermath of September 11, if some may find the regularity of their old jobs reassuring, but now lacking in meaningful purpose. For those who have chosen to work for a community, however, especially those who seek to protect and preserve the natural assets of that community, getting back to work has been a welcome first step in the effort to regain a sense of normalcy and optimism in this newly more vulnerable world we do not yet understand.

That has been the case for staff and directors alike at HFF. No, the haze hasn't lifted yet and it still feels awkward for anyone to say he or she is feeling great. What can fairly be said is each and every one is back on the job and we're doing OK, pretty well in fact, considering what's happened. Only a trained therapist could say for sure, but I am certain a major reason for our will to get on with the job is that each and every one of us knows what HFF seeks to accomplish remains important, has value, real value, long-lasting value, to and for the Henry's Fork basin community and far beyond.

I believe this Nation, however flawed, remains the finest experiment in government the world has ever seen. So also, I believe HFF, with all its flaws, remains the finest hope for protecting and preserving the Henry's Fork and educating all who seek to learn more about this great watershed. Just as resolute Americans have always done in difficult times in the past, this is a time to roll up sleeves, tighten the budget, debate with caring vigor which projects can be afforded and make the most sense to tackle next year, and then do what we can with what we've got today and hope for a better tomorrow.

Hugo Melvin

*The HFF Staff and Board of Directors
wish you peace and prosperity in the New Year*



HFF Position on Commercial Development in HSP

HFF is opposed to any additional commercial development within the park at any location, including yurts, lodges, campgrounds or any other structure or activity that might change the aesthetic qualities or wildlife values of the park. HFF is aware of the popularity of the overnight accommodations available in Harriman State Park, including the dormitory, the Ranch Manager's House, and the yurts. It is sufficient to say that if the services are available, the public will use them. This is an extremely dangerous precedent to set, however, if the park is to respect the Harriman family's desire to provide a wildlife refuge and bird sanctuary. If the park continues to develop services in response to public demand, without consideration to its existing values, we will lose the very uniqueness that makes Harriman different from Yellowstone, Yosemite, or any number of state or national parks that have succumbed to the lure of development. This is not acceptable at Harriman. Furthermore, overnight accommodations are readily available in the Island Park area, including campgrounds, hotels, and primitive backcountry camping. To develop these services in Hariman State Park would create unfair competition with the area's existing businesses. ♦

Watershed Council

As we go to press, the Henry's Fork Watershed Council is preparing to hold its 8th annual "State of the Watershed" conference in Rexburg, ID. John Keys, Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, Washington, DC, will be the keynote speaker and participate on a panel discussing the role of government agencies in watershed councils. Date for the conference is November 6. ♦

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life living undisturbed in the park. The Harrimans were also avid fly fishers and they knew of the incredible fishery in the river. As a state park, the Railroad Ranch would become the ultimate mecca for fly fishers from across the country and around the world.

It is now 40 years later and we, the public and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, are in a position to create a new Master Plan and decide the future of Harriman State Park. With that comes a responsibility to ensure that the original expectations of the Harriman family are preserved, and that the wildlife and fisheries are protected forever. This is not an easy task, and as a society and as individuals we sometimes want our parks and forests to provide more in the way of services.

We sometimes want them to change in ways that will accommodate more interests and more people. It is clear, however, that the cumulative impact of increased services and development in Harriman State Park will forever alter the open spaces in the park, the wildlife habitat that currently exists, and the public's ability to experience these features. The desire to provide more services and accommodations in Harriman, while appropriate for some of our public lands, is at odds with the subtle, and yet equally important need to keep some places as undeveloped as possible. Within the Idaho State Park System our best opportunity is Harriman State Park.

The Henry's Fork Foundation strongly believes that the park should continue to be managed according to the original wishes of the Harriman family. Harriman must not be commercially developed or changed in any way that would result in the loss of the park as a wildlife refuge and bird sanctuary, to be enjoyed by the public in a natural environment.

In order to gain insight on the intentions of the Harriman family when they gifted the park to the State of Idaho, it is useful to examine the original General Operation and Development Plan that was established for the park in 1978. The planners at that time were intimately familiar with the Harriman's wishes and they recognized the uniqueness of the gift. In its summary, the plan provides exceptional insight on the value of the park's natural resources, and the need to control public use and development in order to preserve the resources:

"It is imperative that the combination of resource values that make Harriman State Park of Idaho the unique area that it is be meticulously maintained as nearly as possible

in their present delicate balance. Much of the present attractiveness is due to the lack of people and the lack of development associated with people and their activity. Once opened to any degree of public use, there will be a loss in the quality of the environment unless that use is very carefully limited and controlled to reduce its impact to the least possible."

The original General Development Plan goes on to say, "This is a special place and its value is in providing a special experience. If this cannot be done, we will just have another overused park that provides very ordinary recreation. The 'ranch' deserves more than that and certainly that was not the intention of the Harriman family."

HFF concurs with the original park planners when they declared natural resources to be the number one priority in Harriman: "The continued significance of Harriman State Park is entirely dependent on the maintenance and/or improvement of the existing habitat for the native birds and animals as well as for the fishery of the Henry's Fork of the Snake River. Outside the Cultural Area, the maintenance of the natural habitat and preservation of wildlife in its natural state should take precedence over all other uses." They underscored that fact that "No visitor use should be planned or permitted that will result in the significant disturbance of wildlife."

The Henry's Fork Foundation is supportive of the Department of Parks and Recreation's planning process. HFF's Director of Operations is a member of the Department's Citizen Advisory Committee, a task force that will have an opportunity to help shape the new Master Plan. We have also established our own HFF Harriman State Park Master Plan Review Committee to advise us on special interests and issues in the park. Harriman State Park has a competent, professional staff and HFF maintains a constructive relationship with them on a number of interests and projects in the park. The Department of Parks and Recreation is served by a competent Board of Directors and HFF looks forward to working with them on the Master Plan.

HFF will continue to be a supportive and respectful participant in the Department's planning process. We will not, however, go quietly if the De-

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Harriman...continued from previous page

partment promotes a Master Plan that would allow commercial development of the park or any other activities that would take away from the park's aesthetic and wildlife values. There are many activities that HFF does support, such as environmental education opportunities for youth, interpretive programs highlighting Harriman's many natural wonders, and non-consumptive recreational activities like horseback riding that are respectful of the park's resources. In regard to the Master Plan, HFF is optimistic and cautious, supportive and alert.

Thanks to the insightful and generous donation of the Harriman family, people today can enjoy the park much like the Harrimans did for many years. And like the Harrimans, the public reveres the park for its year-round magnificent beauty, its abundance of wildlife, its thriving bird populations, and for fly fishing that is unrivaled anywhere in America. Harriman State Park is the Crown Jewel in the State of Idaho and the Henry's Fork Foundation is thoroughly committed to making sure that the park remains this way. HFF insists that the park stay a "limited service" park, and that the new Master Plan focus on providing a refuge for wildlife, a sanctuary for birds, a world class fishery, and an opportunity for people to enjoy all of these features without impeding upon them at the same time. This is how the Ranch was when the Harrimans owned it. This is how the Ranch is today. And this is how the Ranch will remain in the future if we make the right decisions now.

For a copy of HFF's official positions on the Harriman State Park Master Plan, contact the HFF office in Ashton. HFF needs your support as we continue our efforts to protect the Crown Jewel of the Henry's Fork. Please consider making a donation to HFF for this special cause. ♦

**Mary E. Reed and Keith C. Petersen provide an interesting historical account of the Railroad Ranch in a 1991 IDPR document titled "Harriman: From Railroad Ranch to State Park."*



Millionaire's Pool is a favorite angling destination in Harriman State Park.

Get Involved...

The members of HFF must get involved if we are to protect Harriman State Park for future generations! Taking no action is not an option! Here is what you can do:

1. Make a special donation to the Henry's Fork Foundation. Mark it "HFF Harriman Campaign." We need your money to help us participate in the planning process and to orchestrate a successful plan to protect the park.
2. Send us information. With your donation, please write down: the number of times you have entered the park over the past three years (at any location for any reason), the number of times you fished in HSP over the last three years and the number of times you fished in HSP during the past year. The park has little information on visitation in the park, especially the number of anglers who visit the park.
3. Start networking. We need as many people as possible to be aware of the Master Plan process and the positions of HFF. We ask you to help us disseminate this information. Please ask people to contact the HFF office to inquire about our specific positions.
4. Be prepared for action. There may come a time when we need to mobilize all the members of HFF to write letters of support, make phone calls, or attend meetings. We ask that you be prepared to take action in the event that a special alert is mailed to our members.

Gift Idea

For someone who is curious about the workings of the Henry's Fork watershed, the special issue of the Intermountain Journal of Sciences on the Henry's Fork would make an interesting and special gift.

The IJS is available for \$10 per copy plus \$3.95 shipping from HFF. Order via the HFF website www.henrysfork.com; by telephone to Susan at 208-652-3567; or by mail PO Box 550, Ashton, ID 83420.

Doris Duke Foundation Focuses on Greater Yellowstone Conservation

The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation announced this summer that it will provide \$8.2 million to promote land conservation in the Greater Yellowstone area. The money will be divided among ten different organizations working in Idaho, Wyoming and Montana. Of the total amount \$2.1 million will go to land protection in eastern Idaho and Jackson Hole, WY. Most of the money will be used to help area land trusts compensate farmers, ranchers and other landowners who choose to put conservation easements on their land.

The Henry's Fork Foundation will receive \$40,000 over the next three years to work on watershed land-use planning issues. Charlie Sperry says that HFF will use the money to assess comprehensive development plans and track proposed developments. HFF will work with local planners to try to better protect the watershed's unique resources and open space.

The grant has already provided funding for the purchase of the Hooray Ranch on the Henry's Fork near Chester. The 1,500 acre parcel, now called Chester Wetlands and managed by Idaho Department of Fish and Game, is accessible for anglers, waterfowl hunters and the general public to enjoy. ♦

Grant Awarded to HFF by Moore Foundation

The Henry's Fork Foundation was fortunate to be selected to receive one of the first grants awarded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation of San Francisco. HFF received \$25,000 as a challenge grant and \$25,000 as an outright gift for a total of \$50,000 in general program support this year from the Moore Foundation.

The Moore Foundation was founded in November 2000 to enhance the philanthropic interests of the Moores, and was created by a multibillion-dollar contribution from Gordon and Betty. Gordon co-founded the Intel Corporation in 1968 and led the company to success as the world's largest maker of computer chips.

The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation supports programs in the areas of education, scientific research, the environment and select San Francisco Bay Area projects. ♦

A Bit of Angling Philosophy

Izaak Walton said it best: " 'Tis not all of fishing to fish." That was in year 1653. It's now 2001 (and rapidly drawing to a close) yet the message remains pure and unchallenged.

We who go fly fishing are a peculiar people. Like other men and women in many respects, we are like one another; and like no others in other respects. We understand each other's thoughts. We cast our flies on many waters, where fish and memories and fancies and facts all rise. We take each one and show them to each other. Large or small, we are content with our catch and, philosophically, anxious to share with others.

I learned how to fly fish in a hit-and-miss, trial-and-error way that makes things stick. I also learned patience, persistence, acceptance and probably a few other good things too. Isn't it interesting how what we do passionately (i.e., fly fishing) provides positive applications in everything we do?

I fish with flies because I love to; because I love the environs where trout, steelhead and salmon are found, which are invariably beautiful (even those desert reservoirs) ... and, finally not because I regard fly fishing as being so terribly important but because I suspect that so many of the other concerns of mankind are equally important—and not nearly so much fun!

Fly fishing is a quest for knowledge and wonder as much as a pursuit of fish. It is as much an acquaintance with muskrats, shore birds, and other fishermen as it is a challenge of catching. Watching herons stalking along from log to rock, or plunging their long legs into the oozy mud is a worthwhile study. They pay no attention to our presence, but occupy themselves with their own fishing arrangements as if the wilderness was their own. Mother Nature is not fooled by technological fixes. We shouldn't be either.

Fly fishing always reaches its peak at a time when the bugs are thickest. Bugs are the thickest at places where fishing is best. So, whenever and wherever you enjoy good fishing, expect to find mosquitoes, black flies, midges, or even deer flies ... all lusting for your life's blood. Yet as we cast, and wait, then work the fly, "the take" instantly validates our efforts, conferring a measure of definitiveness and closure to an endeavor otherwise riddled with uncertainty and inconclusiveness. Few things in life, I think, have this to offer. Yes ... fly fishing! ♦

Dale W. Quigley
President, Magic Valley Fly Fishers
Twin Falls, ID



Snap, Crackle, Moo: The Story of the HFF Electric Fence ♦ by Charlie Sperry

In the mid-1980s the Henry's Fork Foundation focused its

attention on establishing electric fences along key sections of the river in Harriman State Park in order to prevent cattle from grazing the riparian areas. HFF was concerned about damage to stream banks, erosion, degraded fish habitat, and loss of habitat for nesting birds. Under the direction of Dr. Mick Mickelson, then president of the Henry's Fork Foundation, HFF worked hard to convince the state agencies of the need for building electric fences along the river. Eventually a partnership project emerged that included the Idaho Foundation for Parks and Lands, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, HFF, fence contractors, and numerous volunteers. The first project resulted in approximately six miles of electric fence within East Harriman and two miles of fence on Forest Service property across from Pinehaven (Wood Road 16). A second fence project was initiated in the early 1990s and another 12 miles of fence was built on Harriman State Park property, plus two miles of fence on Forest Service land across from Last Chance. In all, approximately 20 miles of electric fence was built.

The fence project was not free of controversy. From the beginning HFF had to convince the agencies that the fence was both necessary and economically feasible. It was the willingness of HFF to orchestrate the project that eventually led to its success. All parties were committed to a solution that would allow for grazing to continue as long as the riparian areas were protected. Even after the fence was erected there was some dispute over the responsibility for maintaining the fences. Eventually an agreement was ironed out that resulted in Harriman State Park taking responsibility for the maintenance of the fences within the park boundary. HFF agreed to maintain the fences located on the Targhee National Forest. This article focuses on the fences maintained by HFF.

The electric fences are erected each summer before the cows enter the pasture and taken down in the fall before the snow accumulates enough to damage the fence. Most of the time it is a fairly simple process of tightening the wires, hooking up the battery, and connecting the solar panel. It is necessary to have a "hot" electric fence if you want to keep cows from walking through it! Yours truly has sometimes served as the accidental fence tester to determine how hot the fence really is! In some years the fence is in bad shape due to heavy snows, errant wildlife, or malicious visitors to the area who cannot resist the urge to drive through the fence. At other times we have experienced difficulties with the battery system and maintaining enough power in the fence to deter cattle, as was the case this year.

We often take it for granted that the fence will perform as expected and that there will not be any cows on the river. In most years this is the case. This year it wasn't. The fence located across from Pinehaven (Wood Road 16) had mechanical prob-

lems and the cattle crossed into the riparian area on numerous occasions despite HFF's best efforts. You know the situation is getting serious when the HFF Executive Director and a member of the Board of Directors can be seen chasing cattle on foot, whipping 5-weight fly rods over their heads like some demonized anglers.

What lies ahead for the electric fence? Fifteen years have passed since the first fence was built across from Pinehaven. HFF has diligently taken care of its part of the fence each year, committing time and money to its maintenance. Like an aging automobile, however, the older the fence gets, the more repair it needs. The stiles used by anglers to cross the fence are in poor shape. The conductivity of the fence has gradually lowered over the past couple of years. Fence posts need new clips and in some cases new posts all together. All of this equates to more time and money. This year, for example, HFF was heavily involved in the Harriman State Park Master Plan process when the fence across from Pinehaven experienced problems. Time spent fixing the fence was time away from our efforts to protect Harriman.

If we want to ensure that the fence operates reliably in the future, it will be necessary to establish this as a priority project. Volunteers and seasonal employees can conduct some of the routine fence maintenance, such as putting the wires up in the summer and taking them down each fall. It requires some knowledge of electricity and electric fences in general to install the fencer, battery and solar panel each year. This job has been the responsibility of the HFF Director of Operations. Even more knowledge is required if problems occur, which makes it difficult for HFF to rely entirely on volunteers. Revamping the fence and building new stiles for angler access is a significant undertaking and will likely involve a contractor, and volunteer groups, and it will require money.

It is up to the Henry's Fork Foundation to decide how important it is to maintain the fences. Based on the number of phone calls we received this fall when the cattle went through the fence, maintaining quality riparian areas is still important to the members of the Henry's Fork Foundation, especially in high profile areas like Last Chance and Pinehaven. Do we want to refurbish the existing fences and stiles? Would it be more economical to replace the aging system with a take-down barb wire fence?

The electric fences protect important riparian areas along the river and are a symbol of HFF's commitment to protecting the river. In the coming months the HFF Stewardship Committee will investigate ways to improve the fences in the future. We call upon our membership to help us with this important work. If you are interested in giving your support to this project, please notify us at the Foundation. Consider making a donation to HFF; you can request that your money be allocated to the fence project. In addition to critical financial support, we are interested in people who can donate material or labor. Please contact us if you have any questions or would like to be involved. ♦

The Drought Continues

Winter Flows in the Henry's Fork

by Charlie Sperry

The summer of 2001 was one of the driest years on record in the Henry's Fork Watershed. As a result of a low snowpack last winter and minimal precipitation during the summer, all of the area's reservoirs were depleted to very low levels. Of immediate concern to the Henry's Fork Foundation was the threat of a sediment event below the Island Park Reservoir like the one that deposited over 50,000 tons of sediment in the river in 1992. Over the course of the summer, HFF worked with the water managers to make sure that Island Park Reservoir did not get low enough to result in sediment being transported into the Box Canyon. In addition to HFF, several entities deserve credit for preventing this environmental disaster: United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR), Fremont-Madison Irrigation District (FMID), North Fork Reservoir Company (NFRC), Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), Henry's Lake Foundation (HLF), and The Nature Conservancy of Idaho (TNC).

The prevention of the sediment event deserves a moment of reflection to recognize the fruits of our labor. A major environmental disaster was prevented as a result of working collaboratively with those in charge of managing water in eastern Idaho. The drought conditions, however, have resulted in a number of risks to the aquatic ecosystem. Despite the best efforts of HFF and TNC, we were not able to prevent the flows from being shut down at the Henry's Lake Outlet at the end of the irrigation season. The impact to the fishery as a result of zero flows is still being investigated. While some fish may escape downstream, there is a concern about the loss of aquatic habitat and the long-term implications for a section of the river that has been the focus of restoration efforts the last few years.

The transition from summer to fall has led to a new list of environmental concerns for the river. The coalition of agencies and conservation groups agreed to keep meeting on a regular basis to address the ongoing drought conditions. While everyone participating is committed to making the most of a challenging situation, the fact is that the watershed is still under a drought. Now that the storage season has begun, the USBR is regulating stream flows in order to refill the area's reservoirs

and lakes by April 1. The Bureau in this region is responsible for the reservoirs and dams on the Henry's Fork and the South Fork of the Snake River. There are some key points that the agency has to address in managing this system.

The Bureau has an obligation to fill the reservoirs in order to provide water to the irrigators. Under the Endangered Species Act, the USBR also has to meet legal obligations to provide flow augmentation for salmon in the Columbia River system. What this means to us here in the Henry's Fork basin is that the USBR cannot allow water to spill over the American Falls Reservoir Dam during the storage season (October 1 to April 1) because that water is needed for flow augmentation later in the year. The exception to this is if the Bureau can demonstrate that holding water back in the reservoirs might result in floods later in the spring when snow melt or other precipitation events add a large amount of water to the system in a short period of time. In other words, you don't want to have the reservoirs too full when the run-off occurs. This scenario comes into play during "good" winters and the result is improved flows at the Island Park Dam. In a dry year like this one, when the reservoirs are already depleted, the Bureau is unable to demonstrate a flood risk and therefore it is not allowed to release water at the Island Park Dam that would result in water spilling over the American Falls Dam.

USBR has calculated stream flows for the Henry's Fork and the South Fork that will allow it to fill the basin's storage facilities, comply with the Endangered Species Act, provide flow augmentation for salmon, and not spill water at American Falls. These figures are 80 cubic feet per second (cfs) at the Island Park Dam and 1,050 cfs at the Palisades Dam. If later in the winter we have a better than average snow pack and the reservoirs are filling, the Bureau can reassess the risk of flooding and decide whether to increase flows accordingly.

According to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game biol-

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USBR Press Release

Bureau of Reclamation and the Fremont Madison Irrigation District will immediately reduce flows below Island Park Dam to winter levels.

The Bureau of Reclamation met on October 23, 2001 with representatives from Utah Power and Light, Fremont Madison Irrigation District, Idaho Department of Fish & Game, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Henry's Fork Foundation to discuss opportunities to shape winter flows for the

benefit of trumpeter swans, fisheries and other aquatic resources.

Flows on October 23 were 150 cubic feet per second (cfs), and were reduced by 25 cfs on the evening of Oct. 23 and will reach 80 cfs by Friday, October 26, 2001.

A 1984 agreement encourages interested parties to work together to enhance winter flows. Often, there is flexibility to shift water within the winter season to protect habitat and expose food sources for trumpeter swans. Under current drought conditions the decision was

made to provide a constant flow throughout the winter.

"Once again, this group has made a timely and difficult decision in order to prevent potential mid-winter curtailment of flows," said Stuart Stanger, Deputy Area Manager for Reclamation's Snake River Area Office.

For more information about this project or questions regarding Snake River water operations, contact Mike Bews, Water Operations Manager, at 208-678-0461, ext. 27 or Stuart Stanger, Deputy Area Manager, Snake River Area Office East, Bureau of Reclamation at 208-678-0461, ext. 15.

my...drift...

by Fred Sica

HFF Executive Director

Those of us lucky enough to live in this part of the world feel blessed to have a very special place to visit. It is wild and romantic, full of Mother Nature's best efforts at making the earth beautiful and wonderful. The Henry's Fork of the Snake River flows majestically through its boundaries and the Tetons grace the horizon. The wilderness is alive with wild elk, deer, moose and an occasional bear. Trumpeter swan call this place home; it's where they live year round. The river is what Trout Unlimited proclaims as the finest blue ribbon fishery in the United States. That place is Harriman State Park and it is all of these things and more.

My introduction to the park came many years ago when I was invited to do something called "cross county skiing." This is not something that you can learn to do in one lesson and my first attempts were filled with slips, stumbles and falls, followed by some rather metaphorical language. The one thing that kept me coming back was the wonderful experience of Harriman in winter. After a few rather trying trips I finally got the hang of it and was able to look at something other than my skis. The wonder of being in such a natural place with a light snow falling, the promise of hot chocolate at the end of the day and the possibility of a glimpse of a moose or elk keep me coming back year after year.

Once the Ranch opens for fishing, very few things are more important than finding a rising trout and spending time trying to fool the wily creature into accepting your presentation. This is not easy—the fish on the Ranch section excel at making most anglers look silly. If you do manage to have a fish take your fly, your problems have just begun. This is the Olympics of fly-

fishing and these fish are some of the best athletes you will ever come across. They jump, turn on a dime, run away from you and then just as quickly head right back at you. All the while you are holding on for dear life with the complete knowledge that you are not in control. If and when you land one of these magnificent fish something will become very clear—this was not easy. The weather was most likely foul, you had to walk a mile or two just to get to the river, carrying all of your gear, and then you had to take abuse from a muscular rainbow trout. And you loved every second of it.

One fall some friends and I took advantage of Tom Angel's program of riding horses into the backcountry of the park to hear the elk bugle. Tom was a wonderful guide, explaining as we rode the history of the ranch and the possibilities of what we might see and hear. It was cold, the first snow of the year was falling and it was wild all around us. Tom was using a homemade horn to bugle to the elk, trying to get them to answer his challenging call. At first I thought it was an echo, then Tom pointed toward a draw in the mountain and I heard it again. An elk was

calling, then another and another. Until then we had to be very quiet, but Tom explained that once the elk started to bugle to one another there was only one thing on their mind and it wasn't us. I forgot about my cold numb hands and my frostbitten face; this was worth it. We not only heard but we saw many elk that day; this is where they lived and we were just a small, non-intrusive part of the scene that was taking place. As we rode down from the elk country I realized that we were so very lucky to have this wonderful place to experience. It wasn't easy. It was cold and snowy and riding on a horse for that long was tough on my rear end, and yet I will always cherish the memory of that exciting day. Tom reminded us that this was the home of the elk, the deer, the bear, the swans and all the other creatures that live in this very special place.

Harriman State Park is a place to be experienced. It isn't easy, it's not supposed to be. Wilderness is tough, it has all the things that nature can offer and at times, enduring them is challenging. I can offer you this consolation: it will be worth it. When you do go to Harriman, protect it, preserve it and respect it. Remember all the animals that live there call it home and we are their guests. ♦



A pair of trumpeter swans skim over Golden Lake in Harriman State Park.

MANY THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING WHO HAVE DONATED \$100+ TO HFF SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

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volunteers who worked so
generously on various
projects for HFF this year.

Will and Di Allison
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Daniel and Irene Gates
Pat Gibbons
Mike Greene
Chris Kirk

Jessie Lowe
Sally Neil
Todd Pace
Lukas Pryanovich
Jerry and Robin Pulley
George Van Tuyl

The following donated in-kind services for
our recent Park City, UT fundraising
event. We appreciate their generous
support.

John & Rebecca Champion
Deer Valley Lodge
Grand Summit Hotel
Rick Hansen
Scott Harkins
Jans
Madison Valley Lodge
Van Rollo
Sage
Steve Schmidt
Simms
Trout Bum 2
Wasatch Aero Services
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Walmart Gift

The Walmart store in Rex-
burg, ID, has made a cash
donation of \$1,000 to HFF to
assist in our Youth Educa-
tion project. Susan Steinman
says the money will go to-
ward the purchase an En-
viroscape watershed model
that will be used for class-
room demonstrations. HFF
works with local elementary
schools every year to educate
youth about the the Henry's
Fork watershed.



The summer crew have all departed,
leaving fond memories and a sense of
gratefulness for the good work they
accomplished for HFF. Enjoying a late
summer volley ball game are (front) Ann
Radill and Jason Szakacs, (back) Patrick
Dalton, Bentley Knight, Helen Downes
and Heidi Butterworth.

Ann is now doing graduate work at the
University of Montana, Missoula, Bentley
and Helen have returned to classes at
Washington & Lee University, and Heidi
is back at Colgate University. Jason and
Patrick completed their second seasons at
HFF and returned to their respective
homes in Ontario and British Columbia,
Canada.

HFF HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS



FLEECE FAVORITES

with full-color embroidered logo

VEST \$45

full-zip front, two side-zip pockets, spandex waist

Colors: Black (S—XL), Navy (S—XL), Hunter Green (S—XL), Natural (L, XL), Red (XL), Gray (S—XL)

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Heavy brushed twill, button-down collar, 2 chest pockets

BLUESTONE DENIM \$40

Prewashed 100% cotton, 2 chest pockets

Both in sizes S—XXL

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BASEBALL CAPS

with full-color embroidered logo

\$12

(regular price \$18)

Colors:

Red

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Black

Kahaki/Blue Denim

Moss Green/Bark

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(Price good through 12/31/01)

TEE SHIRTS

with full-color embroidered logo

LONG SLEEVE \$25

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Colors: Cobalt Blue (M—XXL), Lodan Green (S—L, XXL), Natural (S—L, XXL), Sage Green (S—XXL)

SHORT SLEEVE \$18

100% heavyweight cotton, prewashed

Colors: Natural (S—M), Lodan Green (S—L), Navy (S—M), Royal Blue (S—XL)

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HFF LOGO HAT/LAPEL PIN \$5

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28 X 24 beautiful full-color topo map of the Henry's Fork watershed

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Four full-color scenes of memorable places on the Henry's Fork, 8 cards

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Flows...continued from page 8

ogists and Idaho State University professor Rob Van Kirk, 80 cfs below the Island Park Dam will impact the fishery. The first threat is to juvenile trout that were spawned this spring. The biologists believe that low flows in the Box Canyon will eliminate critical overwintering habitat and as a result the juvenile fish will either migrate downstream until better habitat is found or succumb to predation. The other threat to the fishery is the potential loss of next year's recruitment. The majority of fish that spawn in the Henry's Fork above Mesa Falls do so in the short section of the river called "Redd Alley" located below the Island Park Dam and above the Buffalo River confluence. Past experience shows that 80 cfs will result in Redd Alley being mostly dry and this will reduce the number of fish that are able to spawn, which equates to fewer juvenile fish the following year.

Is there a silver lining to the low flows? According to Van Kirk, the adult fish in the Box Canyon will likely find refuge in the deeper pools that remain. The other positive note is that the situation could be worse if Fremont-Madison Irrigation District were to have requested that the flows be shut down to zero at the reservoir. When flows get below 150 cfs erosion occurs to the concrete gates at the dam, which is expensive to repair. FMID, however, recognizes that zero flows would be disastrous to the fishery and has chosen to support keeping at least 80 cfs in the river.

It would be wrong for HFF to say that the low flows are not serious. We are very concerned about the situation and are working hard to identify solutions. In addition to the threat to the fishery below the Island Park Dam, HFF is looking at potential impacts to other reaches of the river, such as the important spawning area below the Ashton Dam. There is also concern for the tri-state trumpeter swan population that resides in Harriman State Park and other places in the watershed. All of this is being factored into the discussions on winter flows.

In addition to working with the agencies, HFF has consulted with Trout Unlimited to help identify possible solutions to this environmental problem. The one factor that remains unchanged is that we are under drought conditions and without sufficient precipitation the options are limited. The Henry's Fork of the Snake River is one of the world's very best trout streams and thus HFF

believes that every effort must be made to protect this fishery. The dry conditions are forcing everyone to reassess how water has been managed in the past and how we might improve management in the future. The importance of this river to the nation and to the area is known now more than ever. In rural southeast Idaho, the economic value of angling-associated tourism dollars is not trivial and any loss of revenue as a result of the fishery being harmed is significant.

The Henry's Fork Foundation was formed out of concern for the river. Right now we are engaged in perhaps what is the most serious issue that can face a watershed. At the same time we are actively involved in the Harriman State Park Master Plan efforts, advocating for protection of the park's open spaces and wildlife values. Now, more than ever before, HFF needs your help. Please join us in protecting the river and its resources by sending your donation to the Henry's Fork Foundation. We thank you for your support.

For up to date information on river conditions, please visit the HFF web site or contact the HFF Director of Operations, Charlie Sperry. ♦

Henry B. Ellis Appointed to HFF Board

At its regular meeting October 5-6, the HFF Board of Directors appointed Henry B. Ellis of Island Park and El Paso, TX, to a three-year term on the board.

Mr. Ellis, a financial and management consultant, has been coming to the Henry's Fork for the past 20 years. He and his wife Flory have a summer home in the Pinehaven area of Island Park. Mr. Ellis noted that the work of the Foundation on behalf of the Henry's Fork is an important cause for him and his family "to assure that we can share with those who come in the future." ♦

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