

# Highlighting River Guardians



## The Pricelessness of Memories

### The Lowe Family (Left: Steven, Right: Jesse) *River Guardians*

Asked for a single word that encapsulates his lifelong love affair with the Henry's Fork, Steven Lowe is silent for several seconds, his thoughts drifting across decades. He sees his grandkids wading into a sweep of clear water with excitement in their faces. He pictures his own kids, rods ready and overflowing with the same anticipation. Ultimately, he thinks of his father, Waynard "Doc" Lowe, climbing into a Model A during the Great Depression, driving north from his small town of Grace, Idaho to grace itself—a fishing trip to the Henry's Fork that became a family legacy that today lives on in his great-grandsons.

"I think the word is... 'memories.' I'm 77 now. So, it was 60 years ago that I was introduced to the river by my father. All the memories are warm. Of a good place. I haven't been anywhere more tranquil...pleasant... there's a lot of adjectives that apply to the Henry's Fork."

Today, as River Guardians, the Lowe Family sponsors a myriad of data collection and analysis—bug production, flows, water quality. What wild trout need and when they need it. One of Doc's grandsons, Jesse Lowe, now serves on the governing board of Henry's Fork Foundation. Steven explains that viewing the Henry's Fork through a prism of four generations of happy memories, the Lowe Family sees the river as a remarkable gift, and equally as a responsibility. Precious. Not to be taken for granted.

"I've been going there my whole life and HFF is calling attention to the key resources that I haven't even noticed myself...putting their health and importance into crucial context. The emphasis is scientific and proactive. The hydrology, the wetlands, the hatches, the micro-biosphere...what sustains the whole system. It's so important."

"I'm sure there are places in the world that might be just as remarkable. But when I was a kid, I decided right then that I'd be wasting my time to find something better than the Henry's Fork."

"If you're going to experience that place, that heritage, and have your own memories, it's like paying dues. The Henry's Fork Foundation has demonstrated its impact. Over the years, watching its work, the organization rises above the things that others get stymied by. It's proven itself. It's got a helluva subject matter and it does a good job of telling the story. It's not in your face. Our family has supported them for a long time. My father did. He thought it was a spiritual place. And it is. It's one of a kind."

"In the end, I think it's a good investment. I can't think of a better place to save. And I think it's a responsibility, an obligation—to the heritage of it. It's the West. I'm a Westerner. It's a jewel. If I'm going to get a lifetime of memories, I'm happy to pay for that, and do what I can. This place is worth the price of admission."