



### **Board of Directors**

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<http://www.fotr.org>

## **FRIENDS OF TRINITY RIVER NEWSLETTER**

**Fall 2008**

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### **STEELHEAD - WILD FISH OR HATCHERY FISH**

One of the **Restoration Program's** objectives is for the river to produce about 60 percent of pre-dam wild populations of anadromous fish. While the numbers vary, for one species, this apparently would mean success with approximately 40,000 wild adult Steelhead returning to **Trinity River** each year. The objective for the number of returning adult Steelhead produced by the **Trinity Hatchery** and returning to the river each year is 10,000. While **Hatchery** production of juvenile Steelhead has remained constant at 800,000 smolts, hatchery fish survival percentages compared to wild adults have dramatically increased as river flows have increased.

Last year, about 8,000 wild Steelhead and about 46,000 hatchery fish returned to the river. Wild Steelhead experienced modest increases over the last few years while hatchery numbers soared. There is demonstrated evidence in **Trinity River** that hatchery fish are devouring hundreds of thousands of juvenile wild Steelhead.

There are numerous other major problems related to the intermingling of wild and hatchery fish. There is a mountain of scientific information and evaluation concluding that hatchery fish negatively affect wild fish. In a worst case scenario, hatchery Steelhead ultimately can destroy the fishery – wild and hatchery.

**Friends of Trinity River (FOTR) and CalTrout** have asked the **California Department of Fish and Game (DFG)**, which operates the **Hatchery**, to formulate plans in cooperation with a broad group of stakeholders to correct the wild/hatchery fish imbalance. We then want **DFG** to implement those plans to meet the **Program's** objective of 10,000 hatchery Steelhead returning to the river each year. **FOTR** supports and advocates the **Program's** objective of emphasizing natural production of wild Steelhead. This is the only way in which a fishery can be restored and protected.

Both the **Trinity Adaptive Management Working Group (TAMWG)** (stakeholders) and the **Trinity Management Council (TMC)** (final decision makers) unanimously have passed motions asking the **Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)** and **DFG** to take action to achieve **Program** objectives for wild and hatchery fish. **FOTR** and **CalTrout** are members of **TAMWG**. **TAMWG** members are leading the action.

### **INCREASE IN BAG LIMIT OF HATCHERY FISH**

Because of the gross over-production of **Trinity Hatchery** Steelhead, **DFG** has increased the daily bag limit of hatchery Steelhead from one fish to two fish. This obviously would deal exclusively with a clear symptom of the problem outlined above. It does not substitute for taking action with stakeholders to formulate a plan to deal with and to solve the primary problems of overproduction: competition, predation, reduction of fitness, behavioral changes, genetic inbreeding, alteration of fishing patterns, and cost.

This bag limit increase alone is insufficient to achieve the **Program's** objective of 40,000 wild fish and 10,000 hatchery fish. If **Hatchery** production or other actions are not taken to attain the established level at which hatchery Steelhead are being produced, the **Program** will not succeed in fulfilling its objective for wild Steelhead in the **Trinity River**, as required by law.

### **TRINITY RIVER RESTORATION PROGRAM**

The **Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP)** is and will be going through some major changes. **Mike Long**, Field Supervisor in the **Arcata Office** and **TMC** representative of the **United States Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS)** has decided to retain **FWS** federal appropriated funds intended for the **Program**. That amounts to about 20 percent of the **Program's** annual average budget. Those funds are intended for use by the **Technical Modeling and Analysis Group (TMAG)**, the science function of the **Program**. His office also has a science staff that works on **TRRP** issues. **TAMWG** formally has objected to this **Program** division and has raised a significant number of questions about that proposal that remain unanswered. How this will play out remains to be seen. Most **Program** participants see the move as highly detrimental to the **Program**, and in total disregard of the **Program's** organizational structure and intended functioning as set forth in the **Trinity Record of Decision (ROD)**.

The Organizational Chart appearing here is from the **ROD**. How the **Program** could work with the **FWS** operating outside of the **Program** and its established processes for review of **Program** plans and budgets by all **Program** participants, as well as **Independent Science Review Panels**, is unknown. No central questions that have been asked have been answered, nor do many believe they can be answered.

The proposal by **FWS**, called a “Mission Alignment” was developed by **FWS** with a disregard and absence of any input from **TMC** and **TAMWG** members. While written direction from the **Regional Directors** of both the **FWS** and **BOR** call for a unified **TRRP** program, **FWS** is proposing unilaterally to present only its “mission alignment” divided program proposal. Suggestions for improved operation of the **Program** by **TMC** and **TAMWG**, as well as from a consultant retained by the **Program**, that are **not** included in **Long’s** proposal are as follows, but are not limited to the following:

- A change in **TMC** bylaws to allow a simple majority vote (current bylaws require a supermajority of no more than one no vote)
- Additional members on the **TMC**
- Recusal by **TMC** members when voting on budgets in which they have, or appear to have a financial conflict of interest
- Hold regular retreats with the **TMC** to promote cooperation
- Allow non-federal **TMC** members to chair the **TMC**
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities among **TMC** member agencies

Meanwhile, **Ed Solbos**, who headed the **Rehabilitation and Implementation Group (RIG)** retired in early May. **RIG**, as its name suggests, is the implementation function within the **TRRP**. A well qualified person, **Jennifer Faler**, has been employed to fill this position. In addition, **Rod Wittler**, who leads the **TMAG** function, no longer will fulfill that role. **TMAG** provides the pre-implementation science and the adaptive management function within the **Program**. A qualified replacement will need to be recruited and employed. **TMAG** and **RIG** are the two **TRRP** operational functions of the **Program** set forth in the **ROD**. In addition, the **Program’s** Executive Director, **Douglas Schleusner**, has decided to retire early and will be leaving the **Program** at the end of **December**. Recruitment to fill that position is underway.

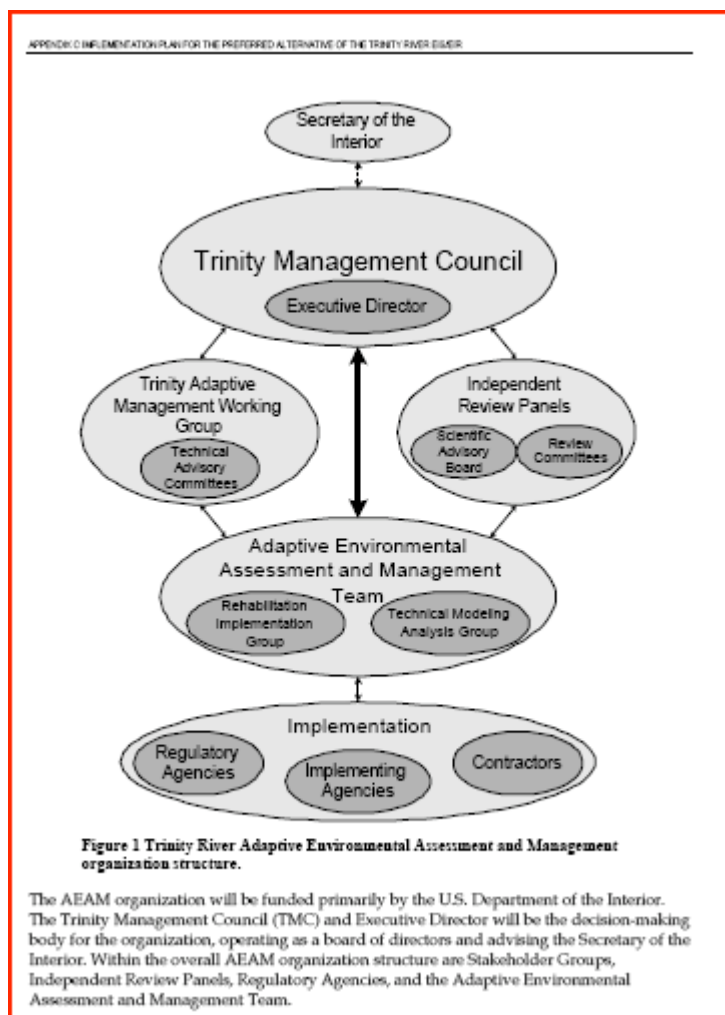
**TAMWG’s** two year charter expired in early September and has yet to be renewed despite **TAMWG** requests to the **TMC** for expedited action. **Federal Advisory Committee Act** charters are for a maximum term of two years. The **Department of Interior (DOI)** is processing the re-chartering of **TAMWG** and the applications for membership on it. Tom **Weseloh**, an **FOTR** board member and representative of **CalTrout**, and **Byron Leydecker** of **FOTR** have re-applied for membership.

In addition, **Tom Stokely**, of the **Trinity County Planning Department Natural Resources Division**, an absolute walking encyclopedia on **Trinity River** issues who has been working effectively to advance its restoration for more than 25 years, is retiring early at the end of October. His retirement is not related to issues within the **TRRP**. He

will be working as a consultant on **Central Valley Project** and **State Water Project** issues with the **CA Water Impact Network** <http://www.c-win.org>

The loss of **Stokely's** contributions to, knowledge of and advocacy for **Trinity River** restoration will be an irreplaceable **Program** loss. There simply are no others working for **Trinity County** who are familiar with **Trinity River** restoration issues. **Trinity County** is one of the eight designated members of **TMC**.

**Weseloh** and **Leydecker** continue to be very active and involved in the **Program's** affairs. What we can say about river restoration achievements at this point is that we've gotten 47 percent of the river's water returned, we've gotten the bridges built to accommodate higher flows, and we've gotten private property structures and other facilities moved out of the floodplain to accommodate the higher flows. Now, at such a critical stage after years of hard work, we must continue to work harder than ever to ensure success of the **Restoration** of the **Trinity River**.



## **RENEWAL AND NEW MEMBERS, AND SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

If you have renewed your membership, or joined **FOTR** since our last Newsletter and **if your name(s) has been omitted below**, please let us know – we want to recognize your support. Also, in a couple of cases in the past, contributions sent to us have not been received. People notified us and we resolved the issue of stray mail.

We again thank **Jeff Bright**, of **Jeff Bright Design** <http://www.jeffbright.com> for his major assistance with maintenance of our website. We are most appreciative of his work on our behalf. We also thank **John Leydecker** for his volunteer work for **FOTR**.

The following persons/organizations have contributed since our March Newsletter:

**Dian and Steve Passek in Memory of Lynn Passek, and Kathy Rose in Memory of Wayne Rose, and**

**Marilyn Allen, Clifford Anderson, E. P. Anderson, Anonymous Foundation, Steve Arelt, Janice and Roy Beamon, Tom Beatty, Margaret and Bill Berry, Jr., Leonard Bjeldanes, Boler & Associates, Marc Boler, Todd, Boler, Joseph Bower, Patrick Bryant, Peter E. Callander, Carl Campbell and Kathleen Rhodes, Norman Christensen, M.D., Joel Cohen, James and Rokhand Collins, Kathryn Corbett, Tim Devine, Stan Dixon, James E. Dowling, M.D., Doug Durham, Dutch Flat Books, Jud Ellinwood and Andrea Webb, Joan and Gene Eppen, and Ernst Land Design, and**

**William Evans, Jr., Stuart Feldman, Suzanne and Robert Ferroggiaro, Jr., Sue Ghilotti, Vince Giese, David Green, Margaret and Robert Grosse, Paul Grunland, Robert Hanke, Donald Hansen, Jr., Susan Hansen, Harry Hanson, Jr., D.D.S., Stephen Haskell, Arthur Hibbits, Ernest Hufschmidt, Joyce and Birger Johnson, Leland H. Jordan, Esq., Dianne and James Keegan, Jr., Jeri and Michael Lash, M.D. William Lenheim, Judy and Paul Lester, John Leydecker, Robert Madgic, Jerry Marks, Richard May, John McDermott, Cyanne and W.G. McElhinney, James H. McKenna, Meadowbrook Conservation Service, Robert A. Montgomery, Eva-Marie and William Morrish, Rex Murphy, Robert Neff, Denver Nelson, M.D., Justice William A. Newsom, Bob Norman, Outdoors Adventures/Kern River Outfitters, Paula Downing, and**

**Bob Pauli, Fred J. Pedersen, Peninsula Fly Fishers, Inc., Clive Rayne, R. Cedar Reuben, Jim Ritter, River Dancers Rafting and Kayaking, Riverbend Adventures Guide Service, Ken Ross, Hadden Roth, Esq., Erich Franz Schimps, Carl Schwarzenberg, Shirley and Gary Seput, James Shively, Frank Short, Mary and John Simons, John Stokes III, Cdr. Francis Taylor, Frank Tedesco, Criss, David, Conrad and Margaret Troast, John Ward, Debra Lynn and John Watkins, Warren Watkins, Jamye and Tom Weseloh, Jeanne and William Weseloh, Darlene and Charles Whitney, M.D., Larry Wilson, John Winzler, Jr., Douglas Witmore, and Barbara Wooley.**

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**Please send information on** \_\_\_ **Fishing** \_\_\_ **Rafting** \_\_\_ **Other (Specify)** \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like to help further by** \_\_\_ **Volunteering** \_\_\_ **Writing letters**  
\_\_\_ **Other (Specify)** \_\_\_\_\_

**My check is enclosed** \_\_\_\_\_ **\$50** \_\_\_\_\_ **\$75** \_\_\_\_\_ **\$100** \_\_\_\_\_ **Other** \_\_\_\_\_