

Corps Foundation Volunteer Excellence Coin Nomination 2022

Nominees:

1. The Ukiah Valley Fish & Wildlife Club

Summary:

The above-named partner organization, the Ukiah Valley Fish & Wildlife Club (UVFWC) led by President Joe Christensen, has been instrumental in the successful operation of USACE Lake Mendocino's Coyote Valley Fish Facility.

The Coyote Valley Fish Facility is owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and operated by the California Department of Fish & Wildlife in conjunction with volunteers from UVFWC. The facility primarily operates as an egg collection, artificial spawning, and imprinting facility for steelhead trout and serves to mitigate the loss of upstream spawning habitat caused by the creation of the Coyote Valley Dam. In addition to its primary operations, the facility is used as an interpretation/educational tool and has an on-site hatchery used to rear a subset of artificially spawned eggs for release into local fishing holes. The Bill Townsend hatchery is ran entirely by volunteers from UVFWC.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the education/interpretation mission during the 2021 season by causing a close of the facility to the public. Fortunately, with the proper precautions, the 2022 saw a re-opening of the facility to the public and successful education/interpretation program that would have been difficult to achieve without the contributions made by UVFWC. Thanks to them, the Coyote Valley Fish Facility was not only able to operate successfully, but it was also able to exceed expectations in its missions of conservation and education for the 2022 season. Some of the Ukiah Valley Fish & Club's specific contributions include the following:

- Provided valuable daily support to California Department of Fish & Wildlife staff for fish counting/sorting operations and showed an increase of presence and support once a week on spawning days
 - An average of 6 volunteer hours served EVERY SINGLE DAY throughout the season (~4 months), plus an increased average of 14 volunteer hours served on spawning days once a week for ~3 months
- Operated the Bill Townsend Hatchery in its entirety and was responsible for the rearing of an estimated 20,000 trout eggs
- Assisted in advertising the re-opening of the facility to the public and personally reached out to local schools informing them that the education/interpretation program has been re-established (USACE-provided fish tour field trips)
- Provided support and materials to USACE ranger staff during in-person school group fish tours to ensure the students had a pleasant experience
- Established hand sanitizing stations necessary for proper USACE COVID-19 safety protocols
- Purchased two new white boards used as a tool to inform the public on fish count information
- Managed and published up-to-date information on said white boards throughout the season
- Donated and set up a TV in the Bill Townsend Hatchery that played USACE's Virtual Fish Tour on repeat during public visiting hours

UVFWC President Joe C.



UVFWC Volunteers & CDFW Fish Biologists in the Spawning Station



CDFW personnel & UVFWC Volunteer Troy P.

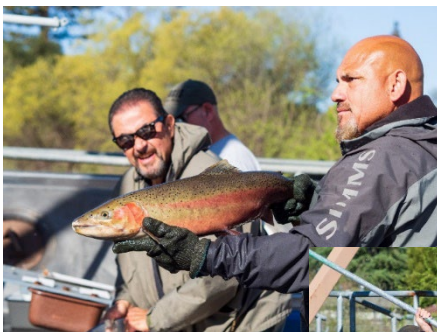
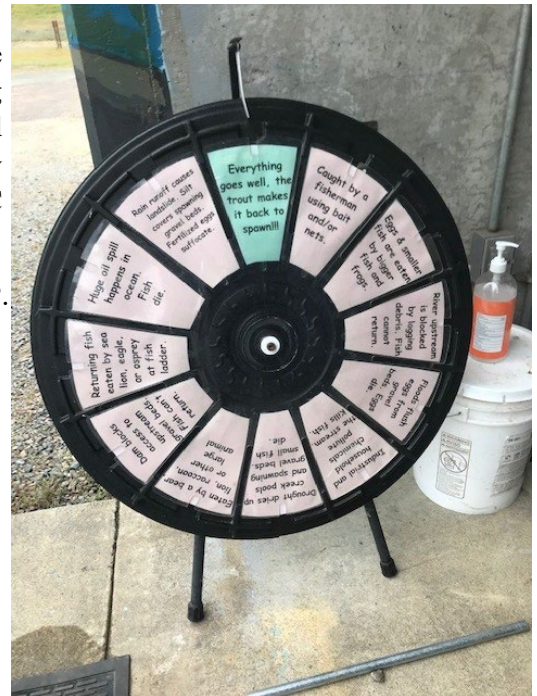


“Beware of Alligator” sign and fake alligators in water donated by UVFWC & enjoyed by the visitors

Bulletin Board with fresh new white board purchased by UVFWC



“Wheel of Life” game played by visiting school groups helped maintained by UVFWC



UVFWC Volunteer Troy P. netting a steelhead



UVFWC Volunteer Joe P. & CDFW personnel sorting a male steelhead into the appropriate holding tank