

## Eagle Lake Guardians 2015 Newsletter

**12-10-14 Update from Trout Unlimited California Field Director David Lass.** "We were out in the field in November doing a trend analysis of the Pine Creek watershed to determine where there are problematic sections of the creek that are no longer functioning properly. We have field work scheduled for January-March (weather dependent) to get out and survey the conditions of every meadow in the drainage and score them based on their condition. We will then spend some office time doing data input and analysis that will help paint a picture of habitat and "how things are working, or not working" in the watershed. Once Pine Creek starts flowing - and I pray that it does this year - we will get a team in to look at the physical characteristics of the channel and determine how well the current habitat can support all life stages of Eagle Lake Rainbow Trout, and what recommendations could be made to improve these. We are also studying the bugs collected from last year's field work at a lab at UCSB, which will help CDFW make the case for a chemical treatment of Pine Creek in the coming years to remove all Brook trout. Good stuff is happening with your support!" Eagle Lake Guardians have donated \$17,500 to assist in Pine Creek studies and restoration projects. Having a plan is critical.

I have personally met with David Lass and believe we are in very good hands and that all of our donations are going directly to benefit our plight. I discussed areas of great concern with David and gave him some documents and GPS locations of the major water impoundments including total number of water projects on Pine Creek watershed that we received from the USFS several years ago. We discussed the several other tributaries that flow into Eagle Lake as well. Seems he had been lacking some detailed information....we are making sure he has it.

Papoose and Pine Creeks began flowing around Feb 7th. That was the day after the massive wind storm that hit the area pretty hard with downed trees and a 6 day power outage. But, that was our big storm for the winter. Pine Creek pretty much stopped by the 19<sup>th</sup> & never really flowed hard enough to counter evaporation and didn't attract any fish from the middle basin. But, the good news is that this was the first year I can recall that eggs were collected from fish that had entered Papoose Creek (near Camp Ronald McDonald). "A total of 97 pairs were spawned and approximately 241,000 eggs collected. A total of 774 trout were returned to the lake" Paul Divine, CDFW District Biologist, Lassen/Modoc County. A weir was installed across the creek blocking fish from re-entering the tributary. The rest of the "spawn" will have been done by boat, nets and electro-shocking. Generally starting at Pikes Pt but the portable system can be moved to different locations depending on where the highest concentration of fish is being captured. Dates include 2/25, 3/4 & 3/11. So, I do believe that Guardians are somewhat responsible for DFW to begin considering all our other resources when the main ones fail to produce. Perhaps other flowing tributaries can contribute more than originally thought. Doubtful that Pine Creek will flow again without a substantial storm passing thru again but as of Feb 22, Papoose was still flowing to the lake. Pine Creek stopped flowing 2-20-15

We lost a critical member of our team last November when our Founder and President Rebecca Walker passed away. We will be having our annual meeting in June. Anyone interested in helping us out, please let us know. We are not giving up on our work unless we can't raise funds. If anything we will work harder to continue to help our lake in memory of our leader AKA George. Our utmost sympathy goes out to her family. Eagle Lake has lost an important activist.

Our ability to throw fundraiser parties over the fishing season is basically on hold. With lake levels dropping and businesses suffering it hasn't been easy for any businesses at the northern ends of the lake. We have a PayPal "donate" button on our Guardian website and ask for donations so we can continue to help restore Pine Creek and assist in preventing an Endangered or Threatened Species Listing for our trout. We can accept memberships too but please note the donation as a membership, a \$15 will be considered a membership though. Our letter to USFWS pointed out why our trout can't establish a native spawn and that has led to the current studies and physical examination of our watershed. These studies are on a fast track and Trout Unlimited should be able to have a restoration plan developed by the end of the season. Trout Unlimited has been very good about keeping us informed along the way. The September 2014 "determination" on the Listing was delayed for many reasons including personnel changes. A group called Western Watersheds filed a suit to get the determination moving. It has not been made. I believe as long as we have a fast track restoration study & upcoming plan, we can get the creek restored quickly.....Next we will need Mother Nature. I believe a listing would draw things out indefinitely and be detrimental to our local economy. Let's work toward restoration first.

I have been very busy this last year caring for the needs of my elderly parents. This has taken up a lot of my time. Until I have more time available, our membership cards are a little more basic than in the past and I have over 300 to make. I believe you all understand & that a card is nothing compared with keeping information flowing to and from Trout Unlimited and making time to meet. Due to the expense, we don't send out reminders to renew memberships. The first number on your card is the month of renewal. Together, we are all making a difference. Please keep your donations coming, we are not giving up what we have built to help our lake and now have a great future of doing some good for the lake. If you have questions, please email or call and leave us a message. All updates and current plans from Trout Unlimited are posted on our website. Thank you for helping. Val 530 249-1430 Message Cell; 530 825-2115 Home (not after 8PM)