

Cultivating the art of fly fishing through a spirit of fellowship and resource enhancement"

washingtoncountyflyfishers.com

Issue 304 **November 2026**

Meeting Location

Westbrook Club House

14255 SW 6th Street (one block east of SW Murray)

Beaverton, OR 97005

Next Meeting Date and Time: Wednesday Nov. 4, 2026

November Agenda

7:00-7:15	Welcome and Club business
7:15-8:15	Entertainment – **Guest speaker: Jennifer La Follette, Golden Trout at June Lake**
8:15-8:30	Raffle and adjourn

President's Message

November, 2026



Tight Lines & A Bit of Rain: November Fishing in Oregon

November hopefully starts the rainy season in Oregon. While the super El Nino is predicted to provide a warmer dryer winter, one never knows what the weather will actually bring. Hopefully the coast streams will fill and the mountains will snow.

The holidays are just around the corner. I spend a lot of time in November and December with family and the fly-tying bench, preparing for Christmas and winter steelheading. This year I hope to get to the Deschutes for some winter trout, usually punctuated by Blue Wing Olives and cold clear days.

We have a new Board member – Tim Cockburn. Tim has agreed to run for Treasurer in February in place of John Gillingham, our long time and devoted current Treasurer. John is planning a well-deserved retirement as treasurer. The Board brought Tim on early to help him get acclimated to the business of the club.

Upcoming Club Events & Activities

We have an action-packed holiday lineup—mark your calendars!

- **Monthly Breakfast Meetings**
  - **When:** Every 3rd Saturday at 9:00 AM
  - **Where:** Peppermill
- **Speakers**
  - **November 4: Guest Speaker:** Jennifer La Follette – Golden Trout at June Lake
  - **December 2:** Christmas dinner at the Club House

For those of you that missed the October club meeting, you missed a very interesting presentation on Oregon non-game fish. Did you know that there are 69 species of fish in Oregon – 36 native and 33 non-natives? Or, did you know that the Lamprey has been around for 360 million years! Or that many of our fish were here before the

current river systems that hold them? Come to the meetings for great learning and comradery.

We will be having another fly tying class (4 sessions) first quarter – traditional flies

Don't forget, Oregon fishing regulations changed October 31. Check the location you plan to fish to make sure it is still open.

Get out there and enjoy our fisheries!

Tight Lines,

Rick Pay, President

Washington County Fly Fishers

"Cultivating the art of fly fishing through a spirit of fellowship and resource enhancement"

Club Calendar

- November
  - 4 – Club Meeting – speaker Jennifer La Follette – Golden Trout at June Lake
  - 21 - Breakfast – Peppermill Lounge
- December
  - 2 – Christmas Dinner
  - 19 – Breakfast – Peppermill Lounge
- January
  - 6 – Club Meeting – Speaker TBD
  - 16 – Breakfast
- February
  - 3 – Club Meeting - Speaker Rob Perkin – Rogue Summer Steelhead - and Annual Meeting/Elections
  - 20 - Breakfast
  - 27 – DRA Auction

- March
    - 3 – Club meeting – Speaker Josh Linn – Topic TBD
    - 20 – breakfast
- April
    - 7 – Club Meeting – Speaker TBD
    - 10 – Trout Fest – Maupin
    - 17 - breakfast

What makes a fly reel worth the money?



Photo by Louis Cahill

Posted on September 12, 2026

By Louis Cahill

What makes a fly reel worth the money? - Fly Fishing | Gink and Gasoline | How to Fly Fish | Trout Fishing | Fly Tying | Fly Fishing Blog

I received this email the other day from my good friend Brian Boggs.

"Louis, I'm looking for the right four-wt reel. I am of a mind to shop the low end for reels since I don't catch large fish that need to be fought on the reel. Is there any reason to not just buy a cheapie and get on with the fishing? How much difference does the reel make anyway? I think of it as line storage and little else."

It always makes me a little crazy to hear that 'line storage' remark. I don't know who started it, but they did a disservice to a great many anglers. Hearing it from Brian made me especially nuts. Brian, you see, is a man with a very specific skill set.

You may not be aware that there is a subculture among us who are devotees of an ancient art form, so ubiquitous that most of us take it completely for granted. These folks, craftsmen and collectors alike, obsess over the minutiae of this endeavor to the point of needing serious therapy. I am not even kidding. Brian Boggs is a chair maker.



Boggs Rocker

I realize that means very little to most folks, but to the initiated its a title like Captain or Reverend. And Brian Boggs is not just any chair maker. Since the death of Sam Maloof, in 2009, many people consider Brian the greatest living chair maker. He makes chairs for which the owner is measured to one sixteenth of an inch before construction. They are so comfortable it makes you want to weep. He also designs exquisite, and outrageously expensive, hand tools for companies like Lie-Nielson. The man is brilliant, uncompromising and wildly obsessive. My answer to his question was simple.

"Yes Brian, a fly reel is line storage. In the same way that a chair is ass storage."

After convincing Brian, he should take his reel purchase more seriously, I decided to share what we discussed here. Fly reels are expensive and the design features that separate great reels from not-so-great reels are not always readily apparent. Especially if you are shopping online, as we do more and more. The reel is, however, a very important part of your set up, even when you think you're not using it. It's an important choice that is worth spending some of your time, and money.

Value

Before I get into the features of fly reels and why they matter I'd like to make a point about value. Lots of anglers have a hard time dropping a wad of cash on a reel, especially after buying an expensive rod. I know, I'm a cheap bastard myself. Consider a few things about that expensive reel, though.

If you are like me, you have more than a lot of rods. I'll wager that, like me, you have more rods than reels. Each of my reels serves a couple of my rods. I buy extra spools to stretch their usefulness as far as possible. That way one reel may serve a 3, 4 & 5 weight. If you think in terms of cost per set up, that cuts the price of the reel in thirds.

It is also worth pointing out that quality reels last. I have reels from Bauer and Orvis that I have fished hard for nearly twenty years. I have landed steelhead on a hundred-year-old Hardy. That kind of service is worth some extra cash. Buy something you will stay happy with. You may not be catching big fish now, but you will. If you keep reading Gink and Gasoline that is.

Drag

Much is made of the power of a reel's drag these days. Too much if you ask me. Most of the better reels today have drag systems that will lock down well past any practical application. Off the record, the designers of those reels will tell you exactly that. Modern drag systems could more accurately be called braking systems and that extra power invites overzealous anglers to break off fish. There is nothing wrong with having the power you need but there is such a thing as too much of a good thing and there is more to a drag than power.

The two things I look for in a drag system are smoothness (often referred to as start-up inertia) and the system's ability to deal with foreign matter like sand and water. The problem with the drag systems in cheap reels is seldom the lack of enough drag but too much at the wrong time. A single grain of sand can cause a reel to lock up completely, ending in a lost fish. Water can cause the drag to hydroplane. This results in a free turning spool, allowing the fish to build momentum, until the water is burned away by heat, at which point there is an abrupt stop. Another fish is lost.

Sealed drag systems are great for dealing with contaminants. The problem is that you can't get to them for maintenance. A good sealed drag system is maintenance-free and will last many years but a poorly designed one is no bargain. There is nothing wrong with a well-designed cork drag but they do require maintenance. If they are not clean and greased, they're trouble.

Weight

Rod designers have done a great job of producing lightweight, high performance graphite rods in recent years. It's put a lot of pressure on reel designers to keep up. It's much easier, and cheaper to make a heavy reel but a heavy reel on a lightweight rod puts the system out of balance. Fishing a rod that is out of balance causes fatigue. This fatigue not only makes your day unpleasant but affects your performance. As muscles become fatigued and painful they lose the fine motor control required for casting. That's what I mean when I say a reel is important, even when you think you're not using it. A cheap reel may be storing your line and making you a poor caster at the same time.

Arbor Design

A good reel has a thoughtfully designed arbor. I like large arbors which take up line quickly and help the line relax by keeping it in a gentler curve. This puts less stress on the connection of the coating to the core and doesn't train the line into tight curls. A well-designed arbor also allows air to pass through, letting your line and backing dry. This dramatically improves the life of your line and backing.

Fit and finish

It seems like a small thing, but fit and finish are key to a reel the performs under pressure. I had a reel once with a handle that sat just high enough off the frame to trap the line. I can't tell you how many fish that reel lost me. The groove where the spool meets the frame is another place that can trap line and cause havoc. A fly line can always be trusted to find trouble, it doesn't need any help from your reel. Finish is important too. Sharp edges can cut line and skin.

These are a few of the things I consider when shopping for a reel. If it costs me a little more to have them, I'm willing to spend the money on a reel that I know I will love fishing for years to come. That said, like I told my buddy Brian, don't let money keep you off the water. It's better that you are out fishing than not. Still, we are out there to catch fish and if your reel is getting in the way it's going to affect the quality of your experience. That's the last thing you want.

3 Short-Range Fly-Casting Techniques for Trout

When trout are feeding within a rod length of your position, traditional overhead casts often fail. These three short-range fly-casting techniques help load the rod efficiently and deliver accurate presentations.

September 08, 2026

By Landon Mayer

3 Short-Range Fly-Casting Techniques for Trout - Fly Fisherman



Many of the biggest trout are hooked at surprisingly close range, where accurate presentations matter more than long casts. (Landon Mayer photo)

This article was originally titled, "Learning the Short Game" in the "On Casting" column of the May 2008 issue of Fly Fisherman *magazine.*

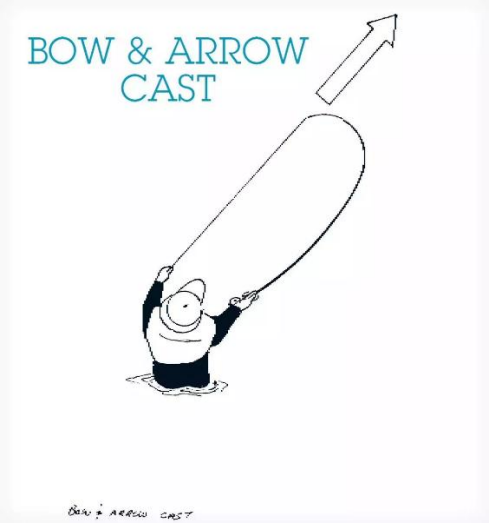
Why Short-Range Fly Fishing Can Be Difficult

For many, the classic image of fly fishing is an angler standing in the river throwing a long, tight loop that unrolls into promising water far away. In practice, however, this frequently isn't the case. Many quality trout are caught at close quarters, with less than 15 feet of line outside the rod tip. Whether a trout is sipping drys under an overhanging branch, or hugging the bank of a riffled run, close encounters can puzzle even the most experienced anglers.

Understanding Rod Loading at Close Distance

Most fly lines are designed to load the rod properly at a distance of 40 feet, based on the average fishing distance of perceived consumers. This prevents the rod from loading correctly at shorter distances. To load your rod in close, and ensure the best presentation, you need to use unconventional methods to get the fly to the fish. Here are three short-game techniques to help you land more fish at close range.

Bow and Arrow Cast



To get under low-hanging branches and other extremely tight spots, hold the rod sideways while loading the rod like a bow and arrow. (Rod Walinchus illustration)

To explain how a rod loads, I commonly ask anglers to envision a bow and arrow. When you draw back the arrow, the bow bends and stores energy in the flexed graphite. Once you let go, the bow straightens, shooting the arrow.

The same is true when casting a fly rod. The weight of the line flexes and stores energy in the rod. When the rod straightens, the released energy shoots the line and fly where you want them.

When to Use a Bow-and-Arrow Cast

You can apply this principle by pinching the line between the cork and your index finger, and pulling back on the fly and tippet with the other hand to obtain a good bend in the rod tip. Release the fly, and it will slingshot toward the target in a bow-and-arrow cast. To get under low-hanging branches and other extremely tight spots, position the rod sideways and bow-and-arrow the fly where you want it to go.

With a 9-foot rod and a 9-foot leader (plus a foot or two of line) you can get a good bend into the rod by pulling the fly past the rod butt or even behind you. If you need to cast a little farther, pinch the fly between your thumb and forefinger, gather a loop of 2 or 3 feet of tippet, and pinch that as well. This will put an extra 2 to 3 feet of line outside the rod tip and result in an equal amount of added distance.

Tip Roll Cast



Use the tension of the water and the weight of your split-shot to load the rod and lob the flies upstream toward the target. This keeps your line taut and allows a straight-line presentation without tangles or spooking the fish. It also allows you to make rapid-fire presentations to the same fish over and over in order to get the drift just right. (Rod Walinchus illustration)

For most fly fishers, casting drys to rising trout is the ideal method. The visual thrill of dry-fly fishing haunts some anglers in their sleep.

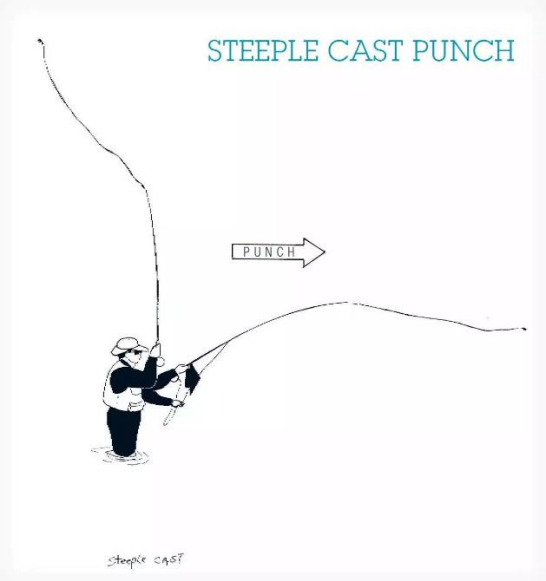
When trout aren't rising and you have to resort to fishing subsurface, casting with added weight can become more like a nightmare than a pleasant dream. For some people, the task becomes more difficult with only 3 feet of line outside the rod tip. This happens frequently on tailwaters, where you have to be close enough to see the fish in broken water while delivering the fly with only a few feet of line outside the tip.

The trick is to use a tip roll cast to keep constant tension on the line throughout the cast. This prevents the flies from hitting the rod tip on the forward stroke, or creating a bird's nest out of your leader.

To perform this presentation correctly, use the tension of the water and the weight of your split-shot to load the rod and lob the flies upstream toward the target. This keeps your line taut and allows a straight-line presentation without spooking the fish. It also allows you to make rapid-fire presentations to the same fish over and over in order to get the drift just right.

Let the nymphs drift downstream and then cast/lob once again. The rod tip should follow the flies through the drift, and then move in a single smooth arc through the cast/lob. There is no false casting with the tip roll, and tangles are few.

Steeple Cast Punch



The steeple cast is normally used to avoid obstacles—like streamside rocks and bushes—on your backcast. I have found that the change of direction—from nearly vertical on the backcast to horizontal on the forward cast—can provide the energy needed to load the rod at short distances.

This cast allows you to make numerous short presentations by using one lift to load the rod, and one punch to present the fly. This keeps you from false casting over a fish at close quarters.

Perform the steeple cast by moving the rod hand up through the stroke, and stopping the rod high at the 12 o'clock position on the backcast. The line and leader should straighten vertically in the air, hence the "steeple" name.

When you make the forward cast, move your hand down and forward, aiming at the water—not above it.

Because the backcast stops at 12 o'clock, the forward stroke is short. I add an extra "punch" to the forward cast—this quick action shocks the rod and gives you the flex you need to reach the target.

The steeple punch is a great tool for close encounters with rising trout. They will never see you or the fly coming.

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Pictures

We have two sets of pictures this month. The first group of photos comes from our casting class held earlier this month. The second group comes from Chris Wilson, who went to Schuttpelz Lake near Reedsport fishing for wild cutthroat.













Fly of the Month:
CfR Trude (Casting for Recovery)

By Ralph Brooks



Background

Casting for Recovery (CfR) provides healing outdoor retreats for women with breast cancer, at no cost to the participants. CfR's retreats offer opportunities for women to find inspiration, discover renewed energy for life, and experience healing connections with other women and nature. The retreats are open to women with breast cancer of all ages, in all stages of treatment and recovery. For 30 years, women from all walks of life have benefitted from CfR's inspiring model.

My daughter-in-law has been involved with CfR for a number of years now and for the last few years has assisted with the coordination and running of CfR retreats in Colorado. At some point she came up with the idea of tying a fly similar to that used for the CfR logo that could be gifted to retreat participants. The CfR logo fly is essentially a pink trude-style fly. Yours truly was invited to help come up with a pattern. Thus, the CfR Trude was born and and now I tie them in quantity on a regular basis for her CfR activities.

This is being shared with WCFF because first, CfR serves a great cause. Second the fly makes a fantastic October caddis pattern and, while not yet tested, it ought to be a pretty good pattern for Searun Cutthroats.

How to Tie

1) Lay down a thread base from the front to the back of the hook.

2) At the bend of the hook tie in a sparse tail of calf hair. Make the tail about twice as long as the hook gap.

3) At the base of the tail tie in 3-4 inches of silver wire to be used for ribbing. Leaving the excess hanging off the back of the hook.

4) Use the thread to cover the hook shank back to front to about one-eighth inch behind the eye. Keep the body even and slim.

Category	Trout
Hook	Curved nymph, e.g. Daiichi 1270, size 8-10
Thread	UTC Ultra Thread, 70 or 140 denier, pink or hot pink
Tail	Calf tail hair, pink or hot pink
Ribbing	Silver wire, small
Body	Thread (as above)
Wing	Calf tail hair, pink or hot pink; Krystal flash, pearl
Hackle	Dry fly saddle or neck hackle, pink, grizzly or not

5) Wind the ribbing wire (Step 3) forward in loose, even wraps (8-10) and secure with a few thread wraps.



6) From the calf tail cut a small bundle of calf hair. Grasp the tips of the bundle and then pull the short hairs from the base. Next, grasp the base of the bundle and pull out any excessively long hairs. A hair stacker could be used but makes the fly a bit too neat, IMO. Tie the hair bundle (wing) in on the top side of the shank about one-fourth inch behind the hook eye. The wing should be about equal to or slightly shorter than the tail.

7) Take two 4 inch pieces of Krystal flash and at their middle tie them to the upper side of the hook shank just un front of the wing. Grab the four Krystal flash tips and pull them over the wing toward the back of the fly. Wrap the thread over the bases of the flash to secure them over the calf tail. Trim the flash so that it is about the same length as the calf tail wing.

8) Select a hackle with barbs that are a bit longer than the hook gap. Strip any "webby" barbs from the base of the hackle. Tie the base of the hackle to the shank at the base of the wing and leave the thread hanging at this spot (not at the hook eye!). Wrap the hackle forward to just behind the eye (leave space to tie off the fly), then wrap the hackle back toward the wing base. At the wing base firmly catch the hackle with the thread and wrap the thread forward through the hackle to behind the hook eye (usually 3-5 wraps).



9) Whip finish and cement.

Variations and

The most durable CfR Trude is tied using calf tail but deer or elk hair can also be used for the tail and/or wing. I'm a fan of hot pink versions, especially for Searun Cutts. However more subdued pinks are likely a better choice to mimic the October Caddis.

Pinks subdued

How to Fish

Dry lines and long leaders re the Order of the Day for the CfR Trude. Strive for long, drag-free drifts.

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Saturday morning breakfast club