

# FIELD & STREAM

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## CONSERVATION

# HEROES OF CONSERVATION

Volunteers step up to protect critical fish and game ecosystems

By Kristyn Brady



### GUARDING A GULF FISHERY JIM BARKULOD PANAMA CITY, FLA.

As the coordinator of the St. Andrew Bay Watch Program since 1991, Barkulod has been training and organizing the efforts of 40 volunteers, who monitor water quality at 84 sampling stations throughout the watershed each month, in an effort to protect its essential habitat for redfish, spotted seatrout, and other gamefish. He helped secure a \$1 million grant from the Northwest Florida Water Management District to be shared between the water sampling program and a shoreline restoration project that will stabilize eroding areas with 1,000 acres of seagrass. He was also part of a team that successfully lobbied to redirect treated wastewater from a discharge point on West Bay to a new, naturally filtering 3,000-acre wetland park. Before retiring, Barkulod spent 35 years as a fisheries biologist, most recently with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "Jim is extremely knowledgeable, and our organization is highly regarded because of his involvement," says Patrice Couch, a part-time staffer for the Bay Watch program. "He's 85 years old, and we all just try to keep up with him."

## DEFENDING WESTERN WILDERNESS

### HERB MEYR MOUNTAIN HOME, IDAHO

Despite being a retired fighter pilot, Meyr helped rally the community against the U.S. Air Force's plans to build bombing ranges on the Bruneau River and in critical habitat for bighorn sheep, pronghorns, and sage grouse near the Owyhee Plateau. He is a founding member of the Henry's Fork Watershed Council, the Owyhee County Sage Grouse Working Group, and the Owyhee Initiative, where he advocates for sharing water resources with fish, improving sage grouse habitat, and securing permanent protection for wilderness areas and rivers. "My biggest strength is bringing people together," he says. "If you see something wrong, you need to put your hand up."



## HEALING A STEELHEAD RIVER

### JASON ATKINSON CENTRAL POINT, ORE.

In a "pure labor of love" for the 263-mile Klamath River, Atkinson, a steelhead angler and former state senator, has spent five years making a documentary to raise awareness of a restoration plan to remove four dams—which do not supply irrigation waters—while promising certain rights to utility companies, farmers, ranchers, and tribal communities. Atkinson raised more than \$400,000 to make the 90-minute film, *A River Between Us*, and proceeds will go to the Klamath Basin Rangeland Trust. "I believe we can heal generations of hard feelings and restore a forgotten place," he says. "I want to build a movement through this film."



## CALLING ALL HEROES

A \$500 grant could be yours!

E-mail your—or a friend's—volunteer conservation story to [kristyn.brady@fieldandstream.com](mailto:kristyn.brady@fieldandstream.com).

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