



MIKE McLEAN/Press

Ranotta McNair, supervisor of Idaho Panhandle National Forests presents the Forest Service Chief's 2006 Volunteer Program award to the North Idaho Fly Casters Club, represented by Earl Frizzell, the club's conservation chairman.

Fly fishing club wins national award

By MIKE McLEAN
Staff writer

COEUR d'ALENE — The North Idaho Fly Casters Club is this year's recipient of a national award from the Forest Service for volunteer work.

Idaho Panhandle National Forests Supervisor Ronatta McNair presented the Chief's Volunteer Programs Award at its regular meeting tonight.

The award puts the club in a league of its own.

"There is only one (volunteer) award annually," McNair said.

North Idaho Fly Casters has been active with the Forest Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game and many other federal and state agencies for more than two decades, providing volunteer-

driven efforts to improve in aquatic conditions.

In 1985, 20 volunteers built structures in Hayden Creek, 80 volunteers contributed 1,000 hours of work on a cutthroat trout research study in 2003, and 65 people worked in 2005 on the Hamilton Creek channel stabilization.

"That's real on-the-ground work that will make a difference with our aquatic resources," McNair said.

The club is active in Water Awareness Week during which members provide information to sixth-graders about fly casting and tying, conservation principles and fly fishing demonstrations. Members are involved in the national 4-H fishing program. The club has developed and funded

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identification cards for aquatic insects, which are used at many school presentations and during its Conservation Festival.

McNair also presented North Idaho Fly Casters with a regional "Rise to the Future" award for education, instream

work and monitoring of aquatic resources. The second award was from the Forest Service Northern Region headquarters in Missoula.

Earl Frizzell, NIFC conservation chairman, said more volunteers will be needed for future projects. The next focus will be fish habitat improvement in the headwaters of the Tepee Creek drainage, Frizzell said.