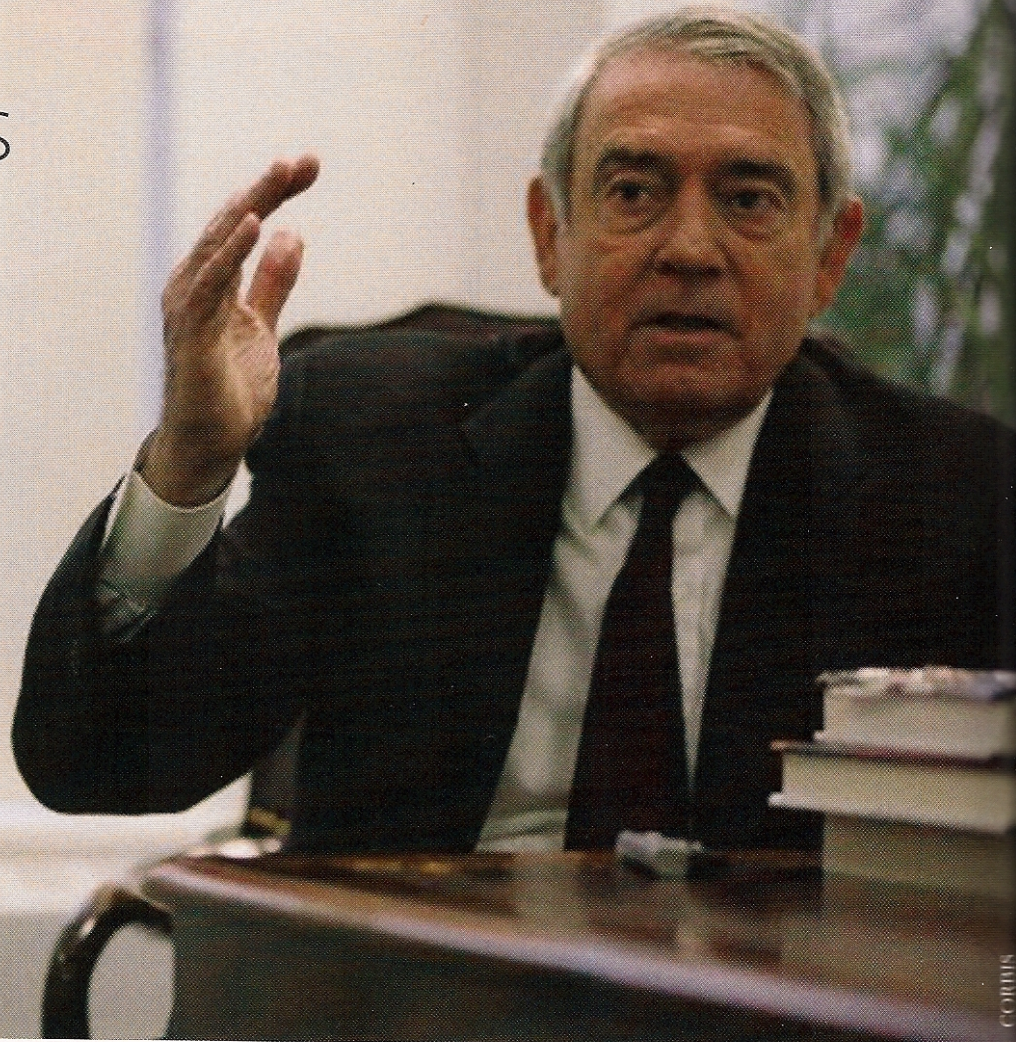




RODHOLDERS

Dan Rather Speaks

Interview by Stephen Camelio



DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S ASSASSINATION, Vietnam, Watergate, Afghanistan, the Soviet Union, September 11, Iraq and Afghanistan (again). The names, places, and stories that veteran newsman Dan Rather has covered read like a history book of the past half-century. With such a stressful and travel intensive job, Rather has always used flyfishing as a way to not only relax but also stay connected to his family. Now, as he edges up on his eightieth birthday, Rather remains an avid fisherman and a respected journalist, as evidenced by his recent television show, the Emmy Award-winning *Dan Rather Reports*. We tracked down Mr. Rather in his adopted hometown of New York City, where the native Texan can sometimes be found practicing his casting in Central Park.

Have you always fished?

I grew up on the Texas coast and my father and his father were big fisherman. We fished for speckled trout and redfish around Galveston Bay and fished for bucket-mouth bass in the farm ponds. When I was covering the civil rights movement in the early sixties, whenever I had time, I'd ask someone where there was a bass pond and maybe throw for a half hour or fifteen minutes. Still, when I was coming up, you might have been indicted for having flyfishing equipment.

How did you get into flyfishing then?

I spent almost a year in Vietnam away from my family, which I had moved to London. My son Danjack, who was seven at the time, really didn't know what his father did, since American television wasn't shown there. When I got back from Vietnam my wife said you need to re-bond with him, so when we moved back to Washington I asked

him when we were fishing near Lake Anna in Virginia, "What can we do together." He said he had read about flyfishing in a magazine. So we went to a sporting goods store in D.C. and bought the cheapest fly fishing gear they had. We paid \$55 for it and an instruction book.

Did he like it as much as he thought he would?

He took to it right away. I'm happy to say that he is now a really good fly caster and an excellent fisherman. We learned to flyfish together in the Potomac and ponds out in suburban Virginia and Maryland. As time goes on and your children grow up to be adults, it is hard to find shared interests. This is something we've shared and is something we have shared with my grandchildren.

So you still fish together?

We fish together pretty often and at least once a year we get to fish in warm water somewhere in the Caribbean—off the coast of Belize is our favorite place—and usually in August we go to Alaska and fish for a week or ten days there.

Belize, huh?

We fish at Turneffe Flats, which is on an archipelago off the coast. I consider Turneffe and the Southwestern coast of Alaska about as close to heaven as this flyfisherman is going to get. We absolutely love both places. Off the coast of Belize there are unbelievably large numbers of bonefish, permit, and tarpon.

Do you have a favorite of the big three?

I'm in constant pursuit of a big permit. I've caught permit, but so far

a real big one and I have not bonded. For me, it's the ultimate fish for saltwater flyfishing. I love to bonefish and they are a hard fish to catch, but permit—they are hard to find, and when you find them they are extremely hard to hook. I still consider tarpon the premier fighter. Thing about tarpon is that they not only fight you right up to the boat...they fight you *at* the boat.

How about Alaska?

We've been going for 13 years to King Salmon Lodge. In Alaska are all four of the major types of salmon, but we particularly like to fish for silvers. Once I got a big silver on a fly line, I just said to myself, "I could take a lot of this." We catch char and grayling and have caught rainbows in excess of 30 inches. We love to fly out and get dropped off at some remote place where we see a lot bears, don't see another person, and just have a great time.

Could you pick between Belize and Alaska?

If I had to choose one place, for me it would be on the upper reaches of the Beaverkill in the Catskills, where we have a camp. Peace, tranquility, and a lot of challenging fish. We catch browns—18" to 19" is big for that water. Seventeen to 18" is a big rainbow from there. There are a lot of wild, native brook trout, which is an excellent fish.

Many presidents and world leaders are known fishermen. Ever compare fish tales with them?

I've interviewed Saddam Hussein twice, and he showed me how he fished with a hand rig, wrapping the line around his hand and having a hook and sinker. While I never fished with him, on some subsequent trips to Baghdad I tried it. I don't recommend it. I'll stick to flyfishing. I did try flyfishing in the Tigris a couple times, but got skunked.

Do you meet fly fishermen wherever you travel?

I've spent a fair amount of my life covering combat and have tremendous respect for our troops. Every time I have been to Iraq and Afghanistan it surprises me how the tightness in the faces of soldiers under extreme and dangerous conditions starts to loosen if you talk about fishing. I wandered into a conversation about flyfishing with one soldier who was in the "Triangle of Death" right below Baghdad. He lamented that if he had fly-tying stuff, it would be a nice way to pass the time. His tension was relieved by thinking about tying flies.

Native, wild fish are hard to find.

I fish on the very far upper reaches of the Little Beaverkill, which has a mixture of native, wild fish, and stocked fish. My friend Ed Van Putt, who is a fishing expert in that part of the world, has taught me to tell the difference. If you look at the front of most gills the wild fish's tends to be sharper rather than rounded. At least, I think I can tell the difference. If I can't, don't ruin it for me.

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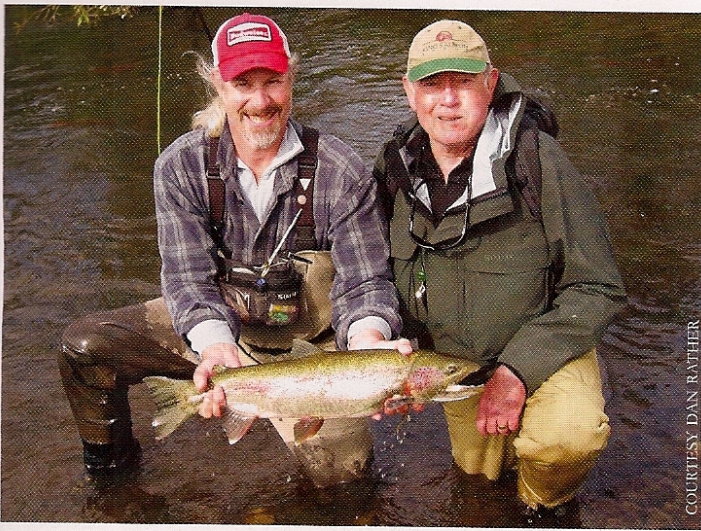
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HARD TO PUT DOWN



COURTESY, DAN RATHER

How long have you had the camp?

Twenty four years. We had a place in Connecticut, but we'd go up there for the weekend and I'd disappear and go fishing. After about a year and half of that, my wife Jean, who also fishes, said, "This won't do." So she found this little fishing camp right on the Beaverkill and now she tells me, "At least I'll get to see you for a few hours during the weekend."

That is legendary fly fishing country.

Joan Wulff, Lee Wulff's widow, has a place not far from where we are. I have learned a good deal from her books and videos. I actually passed her one day as she was out in the front of her place testing some equipment. She was throwing so far I stopped my

Jeep and just gaped. Frankly, I didn't have the guts to say excuse me ma'am, so I just got her book and video. I still can't throw as far as I'd like to but I learned from her that if you pay attention to what you're doing you can cast a whole lot farther than you think you can.

Is flyfishing an escape from a stressful job and travel?

Yes. That's not a bad way to put it. I live in New York City, and I love the energy of this city, and I love people and that the nature of my work puts me in contact with a lot of people. But it's a high energy craft and you need to, from time to time, resharpen the saw. And frankly, I don't know what I'd do without fishing, especially those times when I can get away with my son and grandsons. It's restorative.

Most memorable fish?

There is always the one that got away. Once, in the last hour we spent on a remote river in Alaska, I hooked—and this is not a fisherman's tale—a huge rainbow right at the mouth of a river. I fought this fish for an hour and fifteen minutes because I was so afraid I was going to break him off. Then I tried to horse him just a little and he got away. Beware of certitude, but this fish was about a 35-inch rainbow. That's been at least eight or nine years ago, and I still replay that in my mind several times a year and kick myself for not being more patient.

What about the one that didn't get away?

Not long after we started flyfishing, while I was covering President Nixon, my son hooked a small tarpon off the dock of a hotel near Key Biscayne. I'd worked all day and it was twilight, and Danjack was just fishing off the dock. He fought that fish for maybe 25 minutes. He drew a little crowd from the hotel—a little kid with a big fish. It wasn't my fish, it was his. The difference is he landed it.

KEN BRENNER: WE OWE THANKS

An open-letter, published in the Steamboat Pilot & Today, October 2, 2012

The Yampa River Valley owes a huge thank you to the Colorado Water Trust for supplementing the in-stream flow with its purchase of water from the Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District. Thank you to all the others who supported the effort.

The Water Trust announced in April that it was looking for water users willing to provide additional water for in-stream flow protection. In May, after seven months of some of the driest conditions on record, the Yampa River was looking like it would rival the summer of '34. The Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District discussed and supported the possibility of working with the Water Trust and asked staff to look into the opportunity.

The water would be released to supplement flows of a reach of a river with a minimum in-stream flow decree, held by the Colorado Water Conservation Board. With remarkable dexterity, the Water Trust, Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District, Colorado Water Conservation Board and the state engineers office were able to work out the details. Water was being released starting June 28th, within a few weeks of starting the negotiations. The Water Trust spent \$140,000 to lease 4,000 acre-feet of water from Stagecoach Reservoir. The water was released steadily, at a rate of more than 26 cubic feet per second, until the middle of September.

After the 2002 drought, our Legislature recognized the statutory limitations on loans of water and the need to quickly respond to water shortages on critical streams. The Legislature amended a certain law (C.R.S. 37-83-105) to create an administrative process allowing water right owners to loan their water rights to the Colorado Water Conservancy Board for in-stream flows. Normally, a water user would need to obtain a decree from the Water Court allowing the water right to be alternately used for in-stream flows. That process is very time- and money-consuming. So in 2003, the Legislature passed HB03-1320, which allowed water to be loaned for in-stream flow use during drought subject only to state engineer approval. The statute was further amended in 2005 (HB05-1039) to eliminate the drought requirement and allow leases for 120 days per calendar year, for three years in a 10-year time period. Both direct flow and storage rights can be leased for in-stream flow use. These loans now provide a legal mechanism to add water to a stream on an expedited basis.

There were many other supporters who played a role in the summer release program on the Yampa River. The city of Steamboat Springs donated \$10,000 and worked for better timing of releases. Mount Werner Water and Sanitation District supplemented flows out of Fish Creek. Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association also used some of the water for its Craig facility, benefiting the Yampa River all the way down to Craig.

While the Yampa Valley did experience a wetter-than-normal monsoon season in July, we still would have likely lost the entire summer recreation season. Conservationists, fishermen, wildlife, floaters and down-stream agriculture operations all benefited greatly from the investment that the Colorado Water Trust made in the Yampa Valley. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you to the Colorado Water Trust and its skilled and dedicated staff, which accomplished so much in a short period of time.

Ken Brenner
Steamboat Springs

It's not every day, or even every year, that you get the kind of thanks and appreciation that we have seen this year. We are finding out how much Coloradans and folks from all over the West care about our beautiful landscapes and valuable ecosystems. The experience has been both heartening and humbling. We can't wait to see what 2013 will bring our way.

Warm regards,

The Colorado Water Trust Team

- Amy W. Beatie, Executive Director
- Alyse Greenberg, Operations Coordinator
- Christine Hartman, Communications and Development
- Scott Hummer, Projects Manager
- Anne Janicki, Water Transaction Specialist
- Edalim Kozal, Colorado Conservation Trust Fellow
- Zach Smith, Staff Attorney



This year, Colorado Water Trust supporters put water back into seven separate stream reaches, bolstering flows in over 190 miles of rivers and streams here in Colorado.

That's comparable to the length of the Colorado River from the headwaters in Rocky Mountain National Park past the rapids and hot springs of Glenwood Canyon to Rifle. We're the group that helped them do it.

We care about Colorado's rivers and streams.

The Landrat bassinet (SL52011) image above is used with the permission of Eon. All rights reserved.

During the fall of 2011, we told you that we were on a strategic path to restoring streamflows with a blueprint laid out before us. We committed to focusing in on high priority stream segments, developing showcase projects, sharpening our tools, and creating more interest around instream flow work. Our work in 2012 continues our progress in all areas of our strategic plan, in service to our mission.

In the midst of developing projects, we saw that much needed spring snows never materialized. When streamflow forecasts projected below average to well below average flows in all Colorado basins, we couldn't stand by and watch as rivers and streams went dry. With unwavering support from our community, we built, launched, and successfully utilized a pilot water-leasing program, **Request for Water 2012**. With generous funding, through the program, we were able to add water to over 190 miles of rivers and streams in Colorado this year.

YOUR YEAR-END TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION FURTHERS INNOVATIVE STREAMFLOW RESTORATION WORK HERE IN COLORADO.

People like you were incredibly willing to contribute to Colorado's rivers and streams when drought conditions highlighted how badly riparian ecosystems were in need of relief. But most people don't realize that many Colorado streams go dry even in average and good water years.

Our state's rivers and streams need our help every year. CWT has developed the tools to restore the resources you care about: our rivers and streams. Please help us keep at it by making a contribution to the Colorado Water Trust during Headwaters 2012, our end-of-year campaign.

Your investment helps us continue moving legally-protectable water into struggling stream reaches. When we support streams, **fish win, bugs win, irrigators win, streams win, local economies win, and Colorado wins.**

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