

The Copper River Watershed Project Dedicates the Annual Cordova Scholarship In Memory of Ken Hodges (1954-2024)

To honor the memory of one of CRWP's most dedicated volunteers and friends, the annual scholarship for Cordova high school students enrolling in post-secondary institutions will be named the "Ken Hodges Memorial Scholarship". Ken spent 38 years dedicated to studying the abundance of aquatic resources in the Copper River Delta and sharing what he learned with Cordova's youth.

"Walking encyclopedia" has a deeper meaning when you have actually walked the miles, and that's what Ken Hodges became known for: walking the banks of so many fish streams on the Delta's vast network of watercourses. Ken was our "go-to" person for all questions fish and fish habitat-related on the Delta. He was always willing to share that knowledge with anyone who wanted to learn more about the Delta's fish and the ecosystems that support them. Ken's vast aquatic sciences knowledge and his deep connection to place was evident to all who spent time with him in and around the Delta. He inspired people of all ages to learn about and conserve this phenomenal aquatic environment.

Ken would eagerly take you on a walk to visit a stream you had a question about, and he spent many volunteer hours identifying fish with school-aged students for many of the Copper River Watershed Project's programs. And, of course, he was also happy to take you fishing – he didn't mind sharing his good fishing holes with anyone. One of Ken's favorite volunteer activities was taking Cordova kids on the annual "Hike & Fish" event, which one year became the "Hike & Fish & Cook" event when he lugged a large camp stove out to Pipeline Lakes for a fish fry.

Ken's knowledge spanned all fish species found on the Delta, but he had a special fondness for cutthroat trout. Ken loved being out in the early Spring looking for cutthroat trout and identifying their spawning habitat in the small tributary streams of the Delta. He also had a passion for improving fish passage to help salmon and trout expand their range. Ken led projects throughout the region to maintain fish ladders and improve habitat benefiting many species. His legacy of stewardship for the Copper River Watershed will carry on in all the generations he mentored and for all those still to come.

If you know anyone graduating from Cordova Jr./Sr. High School with a passion for the Copper River Delta and its natural history, they can apply for this scholarship opportunity by contacting CRWP's Kim Casavan at operations@copperriver.org or 907-424-3334.

