

Introduction to Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What Is Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing?

Project Healing Waters (PHW) is a 501c(3) nonprofit organization incorporated in Maryland and headquartered in Colorado. PHW is dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of injured and disabled military service personnel and disabled veterans through fly fishing and associated activities including education and outings.

With 183 Programs nationwide, the programs provide basic fly fishing, fly casting, fly tying and rod building classes. Along with clinics, participants range from beginners who have never fished before, to those with prior fly fishing and fly tying experience who are adapting their skills to their new abilities.

What does the PHW Program Offer?

All fly fishing and tying equipment is provided to participants at no cost. Fishing trips, both one day and multi-day outings are also provided free of charge to participants. It is much more than a one-time fishing trip. PHW began in 2005 serving wounded military service members at Walter Reed Army Medical Center returning from combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. Since then, PHW has expanded nationwide, establishing its highly successful program in DoD hospitals, warrior transition units, and VA medical centers and clinics. PHW is unique in that our volunteers are teaching classes on an on-going, long-term basis. It is much more than a one-day fishing trip for many participants. The socialization and camaraderie of the classes are just as important as the fishing outings and provide them a new activity.

How is PHW funded?

PHW relies on the generosity of individuals as well as private and corporate donors. PHW also solicits foundation grants and government funding. After a thorough vetting process, PHW is part of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC #82526).

Who Qualifies To Participate in PHW?

PHW Participants are defined as the individuals receiving the benefits of PHW program activities (e.g., fly fishing 101 classes, casting instructions, fly tying classes, rod building classes, and fly fishing outings, etc.) on an ongoing basis.

1. Military service personnel must meet both of the following criteria:

- (a) Is a service member who has been wounded, ill, diseased, injured or obtained a medical condition during their active military service in line of duty. "In Line Of Duty" means a wound, illness, disease, injury or medical condition was incurred during a period of

active military service that was not the result of the military service members own willful misconduct.

- (b) Is recommended to take part in the PHW program by their military health care provider (e.g., military transition unit cadre, doctor, physical therapist, occupational therapist etc.) at a DoD hospital, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facility, military transition unit (e.g., warrior transition unit, wounded warrior battalion, etc.) or other military designated health care provider as requiring on-going medical treatment that eventually will lead to a disability. Please note that patients currently receiving treatment for any medical condition at any of these facilities that, in the opinion of their medical health provider, will not result in a disability rating are welcome to attend PHW activities while they are receiving treatment, will be counted as a participant while receiving treatment but are not eligible to be participants after treatment ends.

2. Veterans must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- (a) Is a disabled veteran with a disability rating (any rating) from the VA.
- (b) Is recommended to take part in your PHW program by VA staff, if granted referral authority by local VA leadership (e.g., OIF/OEF Coordinator), or VA medical personnel (e.g., recreational therapist, doctor, physical therapist, occupational therapist, etc.) at a VA facility (e.g., VA medical center, VA outpatient clinic, or VA community based outpatient clinic, etc.).
- (c) Has a military service rating and is awaiting their disability rating from the VA. Note that a military service rating is interim proof of eligibility with the understanding that disability rating will be issued.