

COOL TOOL

Trout Tech

The new technology of river restoration

Cleaning up America's trout streams just got a whole lot easier, thanks to the RiverWorks Rapid Assessment System (RRAS), a waterproof, shockproof, handheld field computer with an internal GPS and digital camera built in (\$5,490; riverworks.net). The unit is made by THI RiverWorks, Inc., in Livingston, Mont.

Fixing a river used to mean hiring a team of highly paid experts to hike every inch of riverbank looking for bridges in disrepair, eroded stream banks and areas of upheaval caused by storm-water runoff and pesticide pollution. Every problem site would have to be photographed, the time and date recorded, and GPS coordinates written down.

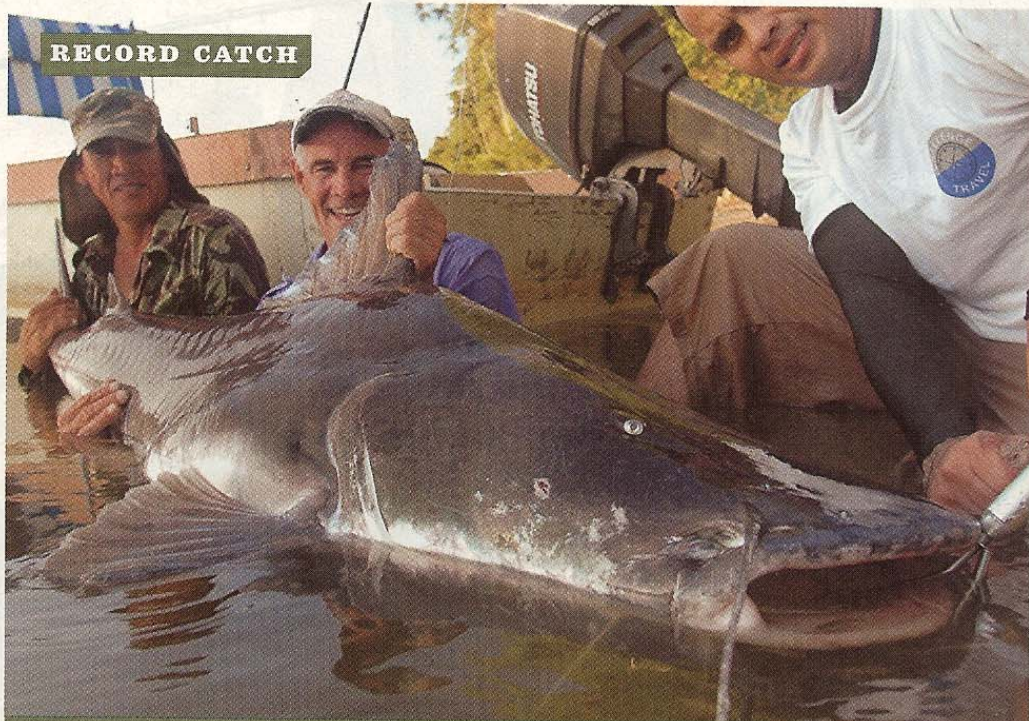
"Before analysts could treat information, you would spend literally months taking what you collected in the field and making it understandable," says Mike Sprague, CEO of RiverWorks.

With the RRAS, one person can do it all right in the field faster and more efficiently, saving millions in wasted time and labor for groups like the EPA, USFW and Trout Unlimited. —B.B.



The RRAS is making restoring rivers a lot less expensive and time consuming.

RECORD CATCH



MONSTER LAU-LAU

Television show host Larry Dahlberg (middle) went to Suriname in January in search of giant lau-lau and caught a fish that should shatter the existing world record for catfish caught on sporting tackle. The 8½-foot-long fish, pulled from the Corentyne River, is estimated at more than 400 pounds. Dahlberg was equipped with a Shimano Torsa 20 reel on a 5½-foot Shimano jig rod. The cat took a 2-pound kubi on a giant circle hook tied to 130-pound-test mono. The fight lasted five minutes, but it nearly killed Dahlberg. "At the end it felt like my heart was going to explode," he said.

JUST DUCKY

Big \$\$\$ Decoy

Just think what your motorized mallard deke will pull down in a couple hundred years. This 19th-century merganser hen decoy was bought at auction in January for a knee-weakening \$856,000, breaking the former decoy sale record set in November, when a feeding black-bellied plover went for \$830,000. Wait, they used to decoy mergansers and plovers?

