

# RIVERS OF A LOST COAST

A DOCUMENTARY NARRATED BY  
**TOM SKERRITT**  
FROM 'A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT'

"And if it was needed before, it's more needed now, if only to know what we had before so much of it was taken away"

-San Francisco Chronicle

"Amazing historical footage"

-North Bay Bohemian

"Rivers is a must see"

-Seattle Times

". . . brings to life an era not that far in the past that is nonetheless like another world."

-Press Democrat



"FIRST LIGHT" PHOTOGRAPH OF BILL SCHAADT BY JOE SUGURA  
RIVERS OF A LOST COAST IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE AMERICAN RIVERS FOUNDATION PRESENTS A SKINNY FIST PRODUCTION  
A FILM BY JUSTIN COUPE AND PALMER TAYLOR GRAPHIC DESIGN BY ASHTON TAYLOR OF DIGITAL MUDD STUDIO  
ORIGINAL MUSIC BY PALMER TAYLOR NARRATION BY TOM SKERRITT EXECUTIVE PRODUCER JEFF COUPE



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# **RIVERS OF A LOST COAST**

## **CAST AND CREW**

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Written and Directed by | Justin Coupe and Palmer Taylor  |
| Executive Producer      | Jeff Coupe  |
| Producers               | Justin Coupe and Palmer Taylor  |
| Narrator                | Tom Skerritt  |
| Editor                  | Justin Coupe  |
| Original Score          | Palmer Taylor   |
| Camera                  | Jonathan Morken<br>Peter Krauter<br>Ed George<br>Patrick Duffy<br>Palmer Taylor<br>Justin Coupe               |
| Website                 | Ashton Taylor and Palmer Taylor   |
| Archival Camera         | Walt Bennett, Joe Shirshac,<br>Russell Chatham  |
| Archival Photo          | Joe Sugura, Conrad Calimpong, Hal<br>Janssen, Al Perryman, Bob Nauheim,<br>Russell Chatham, James Adams Ph.D. |
| Research                | Justin Coupe<br>Jack Berryman Ph.D.   |

Artwork courtesy of Bill Schaadt and Hal Janssen

# RIVERS OF A LOST COAST

## SYNOPSIS

At the turn of the 20th Century, a handful of pioneers carried their fly rods into California's remote north coast and gave birth to a culture that would revolutionize their sport. For a select few, steelhead fly fishing became an obsessive pursuit without compromise.

Leading the pack was the mythical, Bill Schaadt, an off-kilter fly angler famous for his ruthless pursuit to be "in the fish". The new endeavor was marked by a demanding, unspoken code, which made breaking in almost as difficult as breaking out.

By the early 1980s, the Golden State's coastal fisheries found themselves caught in a spiraling decline. As California searched for its disappearing salmon and steelhead, these men foraged for their souls.

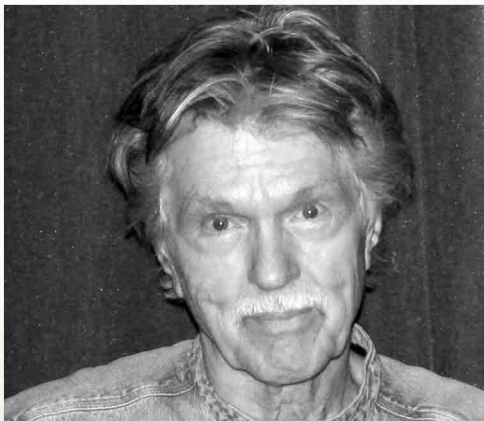


Image courtesy of Conrad Calmipong

# RIVERS OF A LOST COAST

## TOM SKERRITT

In *Rivers of a Lost Coast*, Tom Skerritt returns to the art of fly fishing, where he found one of his finest roles as Reverend Maclean in *A River Runs Through It*. The Golden Globe nominee and Emmy award winning actor used his refined



voice to narrate the documentary. Upon reviewing early versions of the film, Skerritt saw *Rivers of a Lost Coast* as a timely representation of our country's relationship to nature throughout the 20th century.

With over 40 years in the film and television industry, Skerritt is a veteran stand out, with a low key cool. Starring *Alien*, *M\*A\*S\*H*, *Harold and Maude*, *The Turning Point*, *Top Gun*, *Contact* and *Steel Magnolias*, Skerritt has the talent to be a spiteful villain and the demeanor of the classic American progenitor.

In 2004, along with a small group of Seattle-based writers and producers, Skerritt founded "The Film School." Four years later, the school's courses continue to foster creative storytelling that breaks through the stalemate of Hollywood scripts.

Although he admits he isn't the most persistent angler, Tom Skerritt's love and appreciation for the outdoors can be seen in his continued efforts on the Board of Directors at American Rivers, an organization dedicated to the preservation and restoration of North American rivers.

Working with Tom Skerritt was a great honor for our production team.

Photo courtesy of Al Perryman

# RIVERS OF A LOST COAST

## THE LEGENDARY BILL SCHAADT

The central figure in *Rivers of a Lost Coast* is Bill Schaadt, a part-time painter turned full-time fisherman. In his early twenties, Schaadt moved with his mother to the redwood hills of Monte Rio, a small northern California vacation town along the Russian River. While casting shabby hand-tied flies in the Russian's slow moving currents, the elusive angler built an impressive and unmistakable reputation.

Schaadt built the one and only house he ever owned in Monte Rio out of redwoods taken from the property; his resourceful nature was the cornerstone of his unique life. Relying on little more than what he could collect with his hands, Schaadt lived without any reliable income or responsibility. He forewent the amenities of modern society, never creating a family, pursuing a career, or developing financial security. In the process, Bill Schaadt became what many consider to be the greatest fly fishermen that ever lived. But moving beyond his accomplishments as an angler, Bill Schaadt lived on an untreaded path most people never dare step on.

Long after the crowds were gone, long after California's famed angling rivers were forgotten, Bill Schaadt continued on. Today, 14 years after his death, he remains an iconic figure.

Photo courtesy of Jim Adams

# RIVERS OF A --- LOST COAST

## TWO ICONS

From the 1940s-90s, Bill Schaadt and Ted Lindner were two of the most successful and dedicated anglers fly fishing ever produced. With origins tied to the golden years of California's Russian River, these close friends would eventually become bitter enemies.

Ted Lindner, the WWII veteran, was a hard-nosed, highly successful and highly competitive angler. While living through the Great Depression, Lindner learned to embrace the quiet resourcefulness and self-reliance that defined his generation.

To Lindner's counter-point was the flamboyant and loud Bill Schaadt. A larger than life figure with endless bag of angling tricks that included decoy boats and razor blade flies. Schaadt was an source of constant energy and unrivaled enthusiasm.

At first glance, they were polar opposites: Ted Lindner, the stern authoritian and Bill Schaadt, the reckless talent. But at closer inspection, they were two completely devoted anglers who shared more similarities than disparities. Their unique lives and spirited feud became a metaphor for the rise and collapse of California's north coast fisheries.

# RIVERS OF A LOST COAST

## DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

The rapid decline of our planet's fisheries is well documented. The devastated fisheries of northern California are a microcosm of the planet's larger problems. Once a major salmon producing region, in 2008 state and federal agencies agreed upon a complete closure of ocean and recreational ocean fishing off the California coast.

While much attention has turned to the crippled commercial fishing industry, *Rivers of a Lost Coast* examines the situation through the unique, little-known history of California's north coast fly fishing community. From this rare perspective, our documentary provides a symbolic, melancholy reflection on a wild California that has been lost to the growing metropolis.

*Rivers of a Lost Coast* follows California's coastal fly fishing community through the rise and collapse of one of the world's most magical fisheries. To some, this is a story about time and place, about a California that was. To others, it is a story about who we are, what we need and where we are going.

*Rivers of a Lost Coast* is a product of more than four years of research and work. Understanding the fragile nature of a story tied to an elder generation, we worked feverishly to gather first-hand accounts about the fading culture.

Production photo