



Flylab Manufacturer Product Program

WHAT IS FLYLAB?

Consumer Reports of fly fishing—Flylab is a comprehensive resource for fly anglers, providing in-depth and unbiased product reviews by some of the sport’s most credible experts. Our mission is to empower consumer decision making through rigorous analysis, trusted evaluations and transparent recommendations.

Unbiased support—our editorial perspective and content are intended to be completely transparent, no contracts to serve, no axes to grind, other than meeting the interests of the consumer. We’ll also avoid endemic advertising support and affiliate relationships with manufacturers, because it creates editorial bias and complicated motivations when recommending gear.

Membership revenue model—the Flylab membership plan provides access to exclusive content, our Annual Buyer’s Guide, partner discounts and a private online community for a small monthly fee. We are supported by paying members, not brands, retailers, publishers, affiliates or social media influencers.

Partner discounts—for anglers serious about building their fly-fishing knowledge, gearing up for the season and discovering new destinations and travel opportunities, the Flylab membership was created to be an indispensable value and resource. Taking advantage of our 10%-20% off partner deals allows a Flylab membership to pay for itself almost immediately, and potentially, many times over, if you purchase enough gear, or are thinking about travel.

Expert opinion—we have over 70 years of combined industry, media and on-river experience and evaluate more products than anyone in the category. With *Angling Trade*, we've reviewed thousands of fly-fishing products over the past 18 years and regularly predicted the International Fly Tackle Dealer "Best of Show" winners. With *Field & Stream*, we've selected the "Best of the Best" fly products. With *Trout Unlimited*, we've reviewed and curated gear for the brand's premium consumer campaigns.

Our testing protocols are built with unparalleled insights, and our reviews will deliver candid, straightforward and transparent value.

OUR PRODUCT EVALUATION PROCESS

Flylab is interested in building relationships with industry manufacturers to secure fly-fishing gear for the sole purpose of testing evaluations. Any leftover product may be donated to youth fishing organizations, environmental causes or our field testers. We're focused on stress testing the trustworthiness of product marketing claims for consumers. We do not purchase or resell the products we test.

Design intention—we want to understand the thought process behind the manufacturer's design methodology, i.e. what's the product actually designed to do?

Specifications—we'll gather metadata around model, price, dimensions, application, category (saltwater, freshwater, spey etc.) and warranty parameters.

Craftsmanship—we'll provide an overview and evaluation of the aesthetic choices, component quality and general craftsmanship.

Testing & performance—"how does the product execute what it was designed to do?" If the rod was designed to be the "perfect all-around dry fly rod," that's how it will be tested.

Comparison & analysis—our experts have the knowledge and experience to compare, analyze and stack rank products in their niche categories.

Marketing metadata—product, lifestyle or marketing photos, “from the brand” marketing collateral, videos etc. We’ll share these with consumers, if we find them unique and valuable.

Durability—Flylab is not a “scientific testing facility,” but we will be creating unique opportunities to stress test the durability of products, when warranted. There is no intent to disparage, “expose” or “call out” products or manufacturers for underperforming products in our tests. We also understand our testing processes are imperfect, open to interpretation and scientific error. The tests will mature over time.

Company ethos—we’ll provide an overview of what the manufacturer has done to make fly fishing better for everyone, i.e. conservation, water quality, habitat restoration, giving back.

Final verdict—when it’s all said and done, we’ll offer a final product evaluation with high-level takeaways, likes and dislikes and value-focused recommendations. If there’s consensus, or variance, in our expert opinion, we’ll tell you.

PRODUCT PROCUREMENT

As stated above and per our business model, Flylab does not purchase products for testing purposes. Products may either be loaned or allocated.

If allocated, Flylab may utilize the products in our durability testing. As stated above, any leftover product may be donated to youth fishing organizations, environmental causes or our field testers.

If loaned, Flylab may not utilize the products in our durability testing, for risk of damage/breakage, and will return after our evaluation process is complete. We do not pay for shipping, to or from—manufacturers **MUST** provide packaging, pre-printed return labels and addresses for any return shipping.

If manufacturers would prefer their products not to be part of our durability testing, please contact Flylab. In these cases, our durability review will be noted as NA and no evaluation will be applied.

PRODUCT SHIPPING & RETURNS

Primary address:

Flylab
Attn: Kirk Deeter
30960 Hummingbird Lane
Steamboat Springs, CO 80487

Secondary address:

Flylab
Attn: Tim Romano
3055 24th St
Boulder CO 80304

Product returns:

Please provide pre-paid packaging, pre-printed return labels and addresses for all product returns.

PRODUCT CATEGORIES

Flylab product categories are a high-level organizational structure for our buyer's guide and product submission process. Manufacturers should feel free to submit as many individual products for review as they see fit. If you're a small company with a handful of SKUs, send us all you have. If you're a much larger operation with dozens, even hundreds of SKUs, it probably makes sense to curate a short-list of your favorite stuff. If you have a unique product that doesn't fall into one of our categories, we're happy to amend, or update, our organizational structure. We also will make specific product requests from time to time.

FLY RODS

Fly Rods	Category	Weights
Freshwater	Small	0-3 weights
	All-around	4-6 weights
	Big	7-10 weights
Saltwater	All Sizes	6-15 weights
Two-hand	Spey	5-10 weights
	Switch	5-9 weights
	Trout Spey	1-4 weights
Specialty	Glass	All weights
	Euro	All weights
	Bamboo	All weights
	Tenkara	All weights

FLY REELS

Fly Reels	Category	Weights
Freshwater	Small	0-3 weights
	All-around	4-6 weights
	Big	7-10 weights
Saltwater	All Sizes	6-15 weights
Two-hand	Spey	5-10 weights
	Trout Spey	1-4 weights

WADING

Wading	Category
Waders	Men
	Women
Boots	Men
	Women
Wet Wading	Men
	Women

GEAR

Gear	Category
Bags & Packs	Packs
	Duffles
	Slings
Fly Lines	Trout
	Salt
	Spey
Leaders & Tippet	All Products
Boating	All Products
Accessories	Tools
	Nets
	Hydration
	Misc.

APPAREL

Apparel	Category
Outerwear	Men
	Women
Clothing	Men
	Women
Layering & Protection	Men
	Women
Sunglasses	All Products

MANUFACTURER LIAISONS

Kirk Deeter—Kirk is the editor of [Angling Trade](#), editor-in-chief for [TROUT Magazine](#), the national publication of Trout Unlimited, and an editor-at-large for [Field & Stream](#). He also is the co-author of [The Little Red Book of Fly Fishing](#), [The Little Black Book of Fly Fishing](#) and has been actively evaluating fly-fishing gear for the last two decades. Contact: kirk@flylab.fish | 303-808-1285

Tim Romano—Tim is the founder of [Angling Trade](#), the former managing editor of [Fly Fishing Trade](#) and the former photo editor of [The Flyfish Journal](#). He also is a long-time contributor to [Field & Stream](#) and has been actively evaluating fly-fishing gear for the last two decades. Contact: tim@flylab.fish | 303-495-3967

Andrew Steketee—Andrew is the former managing editor of [The Flyfish Journal](#), editor of [MidCurrent](#) and has worked as an in-house product consultant for Hardy USA. He also is a technology consultant, former fishing guide and the co-author of two fly-fishing books, [Castwork](#) and [Tideline](#). Contact: andrew@flylab.fish | 303-895-9459

PRODUCT SUBMISSIONS

Getting started—reach out to a member of our team to find out more about the product submission process. It's also important for manufacturers to fill out our product [submission form](#).