

SWEET WATER 2016

With the snow making regular deposits in the high country, 2016 is shaping up to be another excellent water year. Soon the ice will be coming off and all of us at SFG are excited to pick up where we left off last year!

SFG – NEWS AND UPDATES

2015 was another great year for SFG with a variety of projects and activities once again spanning several states. Bolstered by excellent snowpack and runoff, fish and forage stockings continued their upward trend and illustrate an ever increasing interest in angling in the Rocky Mountain West. Stream enhancement is also on the rise as landowners are continuing to look at fishery stewardship as an important legacy and income producing endeavor. Read on for a more detailed look at a few of our recent and ongoing projects!

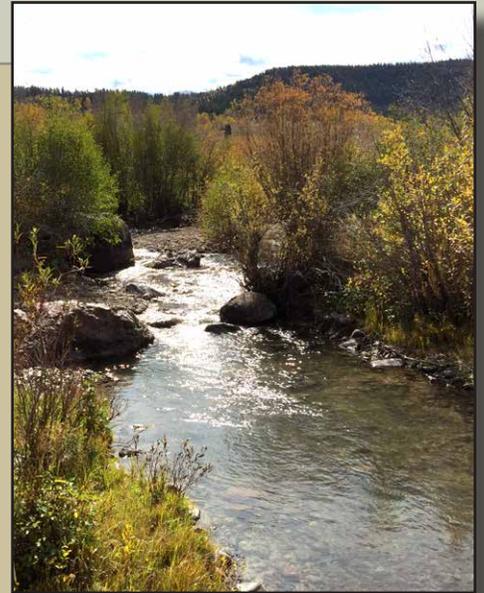
Fisheries Enhancement and Creation – Gunnison County, Colorado



Big Blue Creek is a wild Brook Trout fishery that starts its journey deep in the San Juan

Mountains, at the base of Uncompahgre Peak, and flows north into the Gunnison River just downstream of Blue

Mesa Reservoir. The 2-plus miles of creek flowing through the project area is really a tale of two streams. The upper half wild and rolling, the lower half much more subdued and typical of a mountain meadow stream.



Both sections, while having unique limitations of their own, suffered from a common and overwhelming lack of in-stream habitat along with severe access constraints.

Several months of extensive bed-form manipulation, point bar establishment, and structure implementation yielded stunning results. Accompanied by the creation of an comprehensive trail and beat system, this exceptional fishery now offers a world class angling experience.

Fishery Enhancement and Creation – Larimer County, Colorado

A first-order tributary stream to the Big Thompson River, this reach of Sheep Creek is now an unparalleled amenity for light line angling.

With the initial visit, we knew this little fishery had the potential to be an excellent mountain retreat. Typical





of small mountain streams, this Brook Trout fishery lacked quality low flow and over-wintering habitats. Additionally, access was extremely difficult with dog-hair timber stands and willow hedgerows lining the banks.

To gain access, a strategic and thorough thinning operation was conducted and included an atv trail, fishing beats and even picnic areas. Following the access creation, SFG utilized extensive bed-form techniques, pool-riffle-run development and specific structure placement to ensure a productive habitat would be available throughout the year.

Fishery Enhancement and Creation – Platte County, Wyoming

Situated south-west of Wheatland on Sybille Creek, this ongoing stream and pond project has all of the amenities that an angler could hope for. Traditionally managed as an



agricultural property, the creek was inaccessible due to the dense and overgrown willow community lining the banks. Also, as is often the case with streams in transition from the mountains to the plains, sparse fish habitat was a major limiting factor for what was otherwise an ideal fishery. A comprehensive thinning

effort and considerable in-stream habitat construction allowed the stream to rise to its full potential as a spectacular fishery.

The creation of a two acre pond, complete with headwall, flow control structures and in-pond habitats added the cherry on top of this magnificent property.

SFG - FISH AND FORAGE

With what is shaping up to be an excellent water year, SFG is busy making sure that we have solid supplies for all of our clients for this upcoming season. Seven different strains of rainbow along with cutbows, brooks and browns ensures that we can fill the needs of anyone looking for high quality stocking. Our unique aquatic macroinvertebrate based feeding and rearing program ensures that all of our fish are the healthiest, most vibrantly colored and naturally acclimated trout available for stocking. As always, interested parties should contact us as soon as possible to make sure that we allocate our inventory since supplies typically get tighter after late spring.

SFG also has an industry-exclusive macroinvertebrate rearing and stocking program, centered on the

freshwater shrimp *Gammarus lacustris*, to boost the forage supply of any stream or pond fishery. Fathead minnows are available as well to provide a forage-fish population in stillwater fisheries, allowing all predatory fish to flourish with an ample food supply.

A BIT ABOUT POND MANAGEMENT

On quite a few occasions over this winter season we've been contacted by pond owners looking for some help with their beloved fisheries. The most common issue we hear is that the pond is overrun with weeds and algae and seems to be



getting worse each year. Our recommendation is almost universally **aeration** and to avoid chemicals!

Lake bottom aeration is the

process of introducing diffused air to the pond bottom, oxygenating and circulating pond water. Without proper aeration circulation, ponds and lakes can become stratified, trapping toxic gases (ammonium and nitrogen) as well as decomposing organic matter to the pond bottom. Decomposing matter

consumes oxygen through different biological processes, often depleting all available oxygen in this lower layer needed by fish and macroinvertebrates.

In addition to minimizing the effects of trapped toxic gasses, aeration de-stratifies the water column allowing fish and other aquatic inhabitants to occupy all areas of the water column as well as reduce the negative effects of pond turnover.

Aeration, along with SFG's innovative fisheries management techniques, afford our clients a productive and sustainable aquatic ecosystem. Contact us to learn how we can help you achieve your fishery goals!



SWEETWATER

FISHERIES GROUP

Innovation in Fisheries Stewardship and Management

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A LOOK AT SFG SERVICES

River Restoration:

- Full-scale scientific data collection and CAD based stream design
- U.S. Army Corps and state and federal agency permitting
- Fish and macroinvertebrate habitat improvement
- Structural implementation and construction

Fisheries Science:

- Electrofishing population surveys and reporting
- Benthic Macroinvertebrate studies and forage base analysis
- Fishery management and consulting

Stream Corridor Analysis:

- Riparian plant species inventory
- Riparian identification & classification
- Riparian condition assessment
- Wetland delineation

Stillwater Development:

- Pond engineering and design
- Construction and lining (natural & synthetic)
- Aquatic habitat management
- Custom aeration design & installation

Fishery Stocking Services:

- Trophy Trout
 - Brown Trout
 - Brook Trout
 - Rainbow Trout (Multiple Species)
 - Cutthroat Trout
- Forage base stockings
 - Freshwater Shrimp (*Gammarus lacustris*)
 - Fathead Minnows (*Pimephales promelas*)



SFG conducting a fish population survey



Detailed stream corridor analysis



SFG's Freshwater Shrimp nursery