

# SWEET WATER 2017

Great news as 2017 is on track to be one of the best water years in recent history, with almost all drainages having a tremendous snowpack! In just a couple of months the snow will give way to warm days and SFG is excited to continue providing the absolute best in fisheries management and construction.

## SFG – NEWS AND UPDATES

Landowners continued to make fishery stewardship a priority in 2016 by asking SFG to create and enhance waterways that historically might not have been considered. Recognition of additional revenue sources and legacy impacts that enhancement and creation provide has been overwhelming.

It was also another excellent year for fish stockings, with many clients pulling from our stock of trophy 15+ pounders! Forage stockings also remained on their upward trend as landowners and managers continue to see the value of a fishery that is self-sustaining and does not require supplemental pellet feeding. Read on for highlights from a few of our 2016 projects!

### Stillwater Fisheries Creation – Platte County, Wyoming



High in the foothills of the Laramie Mountains, a

tremendously productive spring had historically gone unused, despite an ideal drainage landscape and



tremendous insect abundance. SFG created several small ponds to serve in a dual role as a fantastic brook trout fishery along with a wildlife amenity for the thriving elk, deer and small game. All of the ponds feature bottom draw water controls to help keep the water much cooler in the hot summer months and were also finished off with solar aeration and small wetland areas. The water controls and other pond features have all proven to be a boon for both anglers and wildlife.

### Fishery Enhancement and Creation – Montrose County, Colorado

A tributary to the Gunnison, this small stream was traditionally used strictly for irrigation and offered little in the way of a recreational fishery as it meandered through hay meadows.

The prescription for this waterway included working the bedform to facilitate pools and holding water, alternating drop structures to manage the grade and make fish passage possible, and strategic placement of





rock structures for habitat diversity. Riffle creation, sinuosity, bank sloping and riparian installation of willows, cottonwoods and alders completed the effort.

**Fishery Enhancement and Creation – Platte County, Wyoming**

A tributary to the Laramie, this stream is hidden in the hills west of Wheatland and proves even small streams can be incredible fisheries. Prior to our involvement, this stream was never considered for fishery use due to its size and functioned purely as an irrigation source. Utilizing the full complement of instream and riparian tools has allowed this stream to come alive as not only an irrigation source but also an outstanding brook trout fishery.



Perfect for 0-3 weight gear, habitats range from fishing traditional long casts to sight casting to areas requiring

guerrilla tactics. The 2.25 miles truly has something for every angling appetite, including a 2 acre pond boasting trout from 2-12 pounds!

**SFG - FISH AND FORAGE**

For the 2017 collection of fish, SFG once again has the ultimate

in quality while continuing to raise the bar. Last year we held back a large stock of rainbows to address the numerous requests for exceptionally large bows. These beauties are currently tipping the scales at upwards of fourteen pounds! These rainbows, like all of our ten different strains, follow a meticulous organic rearing strategy to ensure incredible color, strength and natural forage ability. In addition to the large bows, we have an excellent assortment of stunning browns and cutbows as well.

Complimenting our superb fish are the forage bases to match. Often an afterthought, forage is the single most important component next to habitat to ensure a sustainable, high quality fishery. To address this need, SFG offers fathead minnows along with an industry exclusive Freshwater Shrimp (*Gammarus lacustris*) rearing facility to bolster a lagging, mature fishery or accelerate a new property. As always, the SFG fish and forage is in high demand so contact us early for your fishery management needs.

**A QUICK READ ABOUT POND MANAGEMENT**

The importance of proactive pond management and aeration are difficult to understate. The benefits of quality aeration are very well established and should be a top

priority for pond/lake owners and managers. Many clients each year take the leap and are overjoyed by the results. Their ponds are clearer, fish are healthier, insects are more abundant, winter kill is virtually eliminated and the need for chemicals reduced or eliminated.

We also get calls every Spring from owners who made a different decision and have suffered winterkill, have skinny



fish with big heads, a noxious smell from their ponds and later in the season, overwhelming weeds and algae.

While the debate about aeration's effectiveness and the science within has been over for quite some time, a bit of technical information can make the picture more clear for those who may not be familiar with some of the pond cycle processes and how aeration aids in pond prosperity:

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 and raises dissolved oxygen. This allows 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