

SWEETWATER

NEWS AND UPDATES

Sweetwater was fortunate to have another great year providing our products and services for clients all across the Rocky Mountain West. Extensive habitat projects along with numerous aeration installations and fish and forage stockings made for a jam packed season and a lot of thrilled clients. Read on to see a little bit of what we've been up to and see how our products and services might apply to you:

FISHERY ENHANCEMENT - CARBON COUNTY, WYOMING

For most folks the Medicine Bow river is an unremarkable footnote that flows under Interstate 80 at Elk Mountain on its way to Seminole Reservoir. From its appearance there, one would be surprised that just upstream it is of a dramatically different character. The gradient and flows lend to a true mountain trout fishing experience and the riparian area is lush with cottonwood, willow and alder. Hatches are frequent in this freestone reach with an abundance of coveted mayflies,



stoneflies and caddis.

Traditionally considered an irrigation and livestock watering benefit with angling a distant afterthought, this particular reach was burdened with a lack of in-stream habitat, detrimental historical land practices and very difficult access to most areas. Sweetwater went to work protecting the prior use needs along with installing new



Medicine Bow River, Elk Mountain WY



Medicine Bow River cont.

and improving existing habitats throughout the 2.3 mile reach. With the entire riparian now fenced but punctuated with water gaps, cattle have excellent access to prescribed watering areas while the remainder of the stream enjoys full protection from land use degradation and influence. Additionally, an off-stream OHV trail was added along the entire length with strategic beats cut to the stream edge, allowing anglers easy access with minimal disturbance to the riparian corridor.

SWEETWATER CONSULTING SERVICES

Often times landowners are in search of a way to value or add value to their current amenities or buyers are looking to understand the value of a prospective purchase as well as ways to increase value after acquisition.

Sweetwater has extensive experience helping these groups get their arms around these often complex considerations and bringing ideas and realizations that are often overlooked. This trend continued in 2023 with Sweetwater assisting numerous owners and buyers, often working in partnership with their land professionals to provide the information needed to make these big decisions.

SWEETWATER FISH AND FORAGE

Sweetwater's fish offerings have long been the industry standard for excellence and 2024 is no different. SFG has continued to stay ahead of the curve by making certain we have not only our 14+ pound trophies ready to go, but a full range of sizes to tackle any fish stocking need.

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, Sweetwater offers fathead minnows along with an industry exclusive Freshwater Shrimp (*Gammarus lacustris*) rearing facility to bolster a lagging, mature fishery or accelerate a new amenity. As always, the SFG fish and forage is in high demand so contact us early for your fishery management needs.

LET'S TALK 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.



Sweetwater Solar Aeration Cabinet

Their ponds are clearer, fish are healthier, insects are more abundant, winter kill is virtually eliminated and the need for chemicals reduced or removed.

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 Sweetwater'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!*



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FISH HABITAT ENHANCEMENT GROUP

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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

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*)



Sweetwater conducting a fish population survey



Detailed stream corridor analysis



Sweetwater's Freshwater Shrimp nursery