



From Our Corner

SALES

AUCTIONS

LOANS



MANAGEMENT

APPRAISALS

Collaborative Land Practices Benefit Ranchers & Anglers Alike

By Shannon Skelton, CEO of CFI - Global Fisheries Management

One of the more interesting trends developing in the world of ranch ownership is the relationship between agricultural land use and recreational sporting opportunities. There was a time in the not-too-distant past when agricultural practices and outdoor activities, flyfishing in particular, were at odds. Ranches with fishing opportunities were viewed strictly as a sportsman's ranches, while a ranch with good operating features was pigeonholed as a working ranch.

Luckily for sportsmen and ranchers alike, these perceptions are becoming a thing of the past. Ranchers are beginning to appreciate the lucrative nature of providing a quality recreational fishery to select clients while maintaining the historical land use of the property as a successful agricultural operation. Not only does the utility of a ranch improve when a fishery element is introduced or enhanced, but the overall value of land is greatly improved as well. Many cooperative agreements between landowners and anglers are being formed, and some states are even facilitating agreements to improve public angling access.

SO WHY DOES THIS UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP WORK?

Several factors have triggered this change in attitude. First and foremost, for many ranchers, a quality fishery is a readily attainable goal. Many ranches have streams, rivers, ponds or lakes that are used primarily for agricultural operations. Through minor management shifts, these can be enhanced and developed into extremely productive fisheries that can deliver additional income through angling club leases and trespass rights, which allow anglers access to great live water or still water amenities. These previously inaccessible private riverfronts or spring creeks can be accessed by anglers for a fee or via a fishing lease attained by an outfitter.

The different land management practices needed to provide an excellent fishery differ widely, with many biological parameters to be addressed for each individual ranch.

Some fisheries need only a little habitat tweaking and some fencing to prevent livestock from trampling the stream banks, while others require a more in-depth stream restoration or enhancement program to create a viable sport fishery.

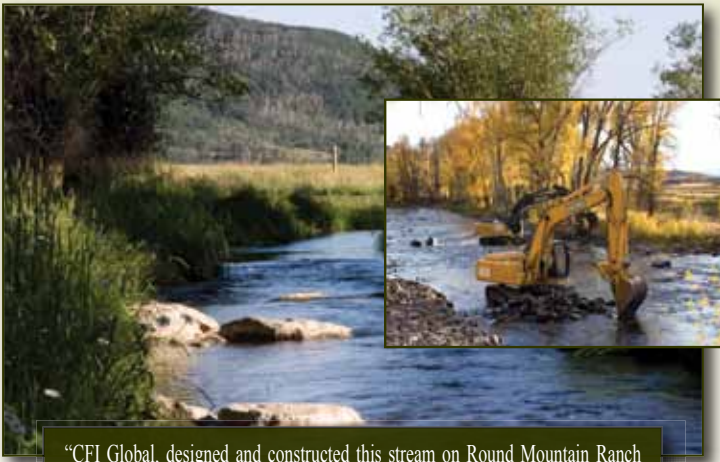
Each property, once assessed can be managed to maximize both attributes while promoting sound and sustainable land practices. Once these practices are in place, the ranch becomes multifaceted and therefore more valuable, while promoting one's standing in the community.

BUILDING AND MANAGING PRODUCTIVE FISHERIES

As noted above, competent biological and physical studies are often required to understand the complex processes impacting each fishery and ascertain what is needed to make them great. If the science reveals that physical manipulation is what the stream needs to be biologically productive, then a full stream restoration is necessary. The most successful projects enlist the services of a qualified, reputable fisheries enhancement and management firm to provide a complete project plan.

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“CFI Global, designed and constructed this stream on Round Mountain Ranch to provide an exceptional fishery while accentuating the aesthetics of the natural landscape. The size of the stream belies its hefty population of large fish.”

Round Mountain Ranch, in Steamboat Springs, is one such property that successfully created a tremendous fishery while maintaining a high-quality livestock operation and hay yield. A newly constructed spring creek meanders through lush grasses and timberland in an area where only an irrigation ditch once flowed. Through careful study and design, along with strategic structural manipulation, a thriving trout fishery - truly angler’s paradise - now exists in a previously unused woodland area. The owner’s vision for a working agricultural property with world-class angling opportunities was realized with the completion of the spring creek which now offers a tremendous fishery for his personal guests.

Another property in the same vicinity, the Wood Ranch, also accomplished the objective of dual productivity. A three-mile stretch of the Elk River along the ranch property line suffered from a severe lack of piscine habitat.

“The river fished okay in the spring and early summer, but as soon as the water level started to drop, any trout would be forced to vacate the property,” said the ranch owner, former NFL player and Co-Founder of Under Armour, Ryan Wood.

A habitat enhancement plan was implemented. Structural improvements were made to the river in the fall of the year. The fishery’s productivity now matches the ranch’s agricultural output, which grows a high-yield hay crop and boasts a very successful all-natural beef operation. With the river fishing great, Wood has opened his ranch up to guests who enjoy this added feature of the ranch.

“It’s the best of both worlds,” Wood said. “The productivity has increased exponentially, and the fishing is terrific year-round. Guest ranching is an excellent way to improve the financial viability of the property and allow more people to enjoy and appreciate what we have here.”

Wood’s sentiments are surely echoed by many property owners who have already discovered and implemented the same land practices. With many more landowners choosing to collaboratively manage their ranches for fish as well as agriculture, a new type of ranching experience is being created. These practices are not only changing the face of modern ranch ownership, but are creating a truly positive impact on our Western ranching heritage. ■



Shannon Skelton - CEO of CFI

About CFI - Global Fisheries Management:

Based in Fort Collins, CO, CFI is on the forefront of fisheries enhancement and fishery consulting. Through biological and technological advancements, CFI has led the industry that creates, enhances, and restores first-class fisheries in the United States and throughout the world. From river enhancements in Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, and New Mexico to stream creation in Argentina, CFI is a leader in freshwater fishery management. www.cfglobal.com.

Hall and Hall Auctions

NEWS

Upcoming Auction!

1,584 +/- ACRES

FISHTRAP RANCH - WISE RIVER, MONTANA

Auction Date: November 7th, 2011
 Qualified bids must be received prior to November 1st, 2011.

Hall and Hall’s auction business has quickly moved from the idea of adding an additional service for our clients to becoming one of the fastest growing auction companies of premiere farm and ranch properties in the United States. Since inception at the beginning of 2011, our auctions have totaled over \$42 million dollars in sales. We have reviewed potential auction properties from Washington to Florida and everywhere in between. While auctions are not the perfect solution for every property, they are an attractive solution for many.

Recently, we handled the successful sale of the very prominent Camp Cooley Ranch near Franklin, Texas. In keeping with Hall and Hall tradition, we have taken an approach that there are alternative marketing methods for every property. Our innovative auction programs fall into a variety of approaches. We have conducted open-outcry auctions where the public is invited, private auctions where qualified bids must be received prior to an auction invitation, sealed bid auctions, and court-ordered bankruptcy auctions. Each property and selling situation is analyzed by our unique partnership model prior to a suggestion being made regarding the best way to market a property. **For more information contact Scott Shuman at (970) 716-2120 or any of the Hall and Hall Partners.** ■

