

## Reflecting on SFG 101

Thanks again to our deputy SFG coordinator, Jennifer Dodd, for chairing the whole day, all of our valued contributors and audience members for making the 101<sup>st</sup> SFG meeting such a superb event – filled with an impressive breadth of high quality scientific talks and posters, delivered by a blend of first-time presenters all the way through to our most prolific speaker (i.e. Ronald Campbell giving a 12<sup>th</sup> SFG presentation, the Annual Buckland Lecture, equivalent to giving one talk every 3 years in his SFG membership lifetime so far).

This conveys a message about us starting from somewhere – emphasising how SFG meetings offer a safe place for our SFG members to connect with each other and confidently grow skills (e.g. public speaking) through exposure to experience, in an informal and friendly setting, over time. Something we'll aim to do better is give timely constructive feedback to our presenters to support ongoing personal development. Likewise, recognising that we're products of continuous development – the SFG team welcome helpful comments on bettering our presenting style in the future!

We appreciated seeing a good turn out to support the event – a diverse mix from new faces to longstanding SFG members, including those who'd travelled from further afield to attend like Steve Thackeray (CEH, Lancaster), who rolled up his sleeves to help with setting up, very much enjoyed his first ever SFG meeting and left with a strong impression of our community's aspirations.

## Spring 2019 Meeting Announcement

Our themed SFG meetings seem to be particularly popular – so, we've decided to hold these regularly in Spring-time and continue supporting traditional open SFG meetings in Autumn. We've said that we'll try out different formats (e.g. speed presentations, workshops, etc.) to keep things fresh and also how keen we are to share the experience of chairing future meetings with our SFG community.

SFG member (and former SFG team member) Charlie Perfect of SEPA's Water Environment Fund (WEF) Team has taken this on board and kindly offered to lead the coordination of our Spring 2019 meeting – themed around **“Exploring the practicalities of delivering freshwater conservation and restoration projects”** which will take place on **Thurs 25 April** at Stirling University. The format has yet to evolve but is likely to consist of morning and afternoon speakers, careers and poster session, intertwined with a panel discussion.

**Interested?** We're seeking **presentations** (on all types of freshwater restoration and conservation projects, both big and small) from our SFG members, **student/early career session facilitators** and **short media stories** (e.g. 1 min video clips) to showcase on the day. Expressions of interest are invited

by email ([charles.perfect@sepa.org.uk](mailto:charles.perfect@sepa.org.uk)) **asap** – we’re really looking forward to collaborating with and supporting Charlie during the coming months to help his vision for the Spring 2019 SFG meeting come to life!

Charlie understands the SFG’s transformational influence the SFG’s had on the career pathways of many of our SFG members, and with this comes an intrinsic cultural responsibility for helping others flourish along the way – it’s inspiring to see our SFG members creating opportunities for developing the future environmental leaders, the people in our SFG community who’ll be caring for our precious freshwater resource decades from now.

### **SFG Moving Forward**

As you know, we’re always thinking about the SFG’s future and are delighted to welcome a new addition to the SFG team – Hannah Walkinshaw, in the role of SFG Assistant Coordinator. A marine and freshwater biology graduate from the University of Glasgow, she also has a background in science communication and currently works as an Assistant Scientist with SEPA.

Amongst other areas, Hannah’s looking forward to channelling her enthusiasm and excellent organisational skills into helping shape SFG meeting agendas and has already created our new mailbox ([scottishfreshwatergroup@sepa.org.uk](mailto:scottishfreshwatergroup@sepa.org.uk)) for streamlining SFG correspondence. It would be a great help to us, if all SFG members used this mailbox for SFG related matters (e.g. ideas, talk offers, etc.) to optimise our communication. Of course, the SFG team are happy to respond individually – please note we each commit a reasonable portion of personal time to supporting the cause and so, there may be a slight delay in our response.

Our SFG logo is currently under development – several interim designs have been produced by the CEH graphic design team and were polled at our Autumnal meeting. These designs aren’t quite in a “fixed” position, meaning we’re still looking for feedback and inclusive representation from our SFG members – a separate communication will follow, on behalf of Laurence Carvalho, where you will be invited to cast a final vote on your favourite concept and even after then, it’ll need tweaked by our experts. It’s a delicate process trying to balance the practicalities of logo simplicity (it’s still got to look great when minimised), with something which reflects the SFG’s diversity and we haven’t quite got there yet! We’ll try our best to create a clear and representative SFG logo but there’s likely a trade-off to be had somewhere along the way – however, if anyone can come up with a creative solution, please contact [laca@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:laca@ceh.ac.uk) with your suggestions.

In other news, our SFG network continues to grow with 15 new members joining in the past 6 months and several more appearing last week! Please keep up the great promotional work by encouraging interested people to connect with us – it's free, straightforward to join (simply contact the SFG team) and will nurture the longevity and vitality of our SFG community, for a many years to come. It's also really encouraging to see our SFG members making the most of these development opportunities and we're already planning several SFG meetings ahead.

If you've got ideas on future themes, how to make improvements and would like to get more involved with the hands on delivery of SFG meetings (e.g. chairing, presenting and organising) – please get in touch with us. We're also keen to hear your thoughts on moving the SFG forward!

Best wishes,

Pauline & the SFG team