



LakeFront

Quarterly Newsletter of the Whitefish Lake Institute

Summer 2019

Aquatic Invasive Species Program Update

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention efforts in Montana as of August 6th have included 64,000 watercraft inspections by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and its partners, including more than 1,200 inspected watercraft via the WLI / City of Whitefish partnership. Statewide, 13 AIS fouled vessels have been intercepted. A number of new watercraft inspection stations have opened, including three run by conservation districts (CDs): Broadus operated by the Powder River CD, St. Xavier operated by the Big Horn CD, and Wibaux operated by the Garfield CD.

In Whitefish, the decontamination station for high-risk watercraft is now at the City Beach Overflow Parking Lot. The site is more convenient for watercraft owners in need of this service, and site improvements will occur this fall.

Staff from WLI and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks continued work on the Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) eradication effort on Beaver Lake—work that has been ongoing since EWM was first discovered in 2012. New plants were discovered this year near the boat ramp. A suction dredge effort removed the plants and bottom barriers were placed. A follow-up survey will be conducted in August.

And, some boaters in Ravalli were treated with very special watercraft inspections by Governor Steve Bullock, who visited the station to help kick off the busy Fourth of July weekend. Montana FWP supplies weekly updates of the statewide AIS effort at <http://cleandraindry.mt.gov/Watercraft-Inspections>.



Thanks for joining us for the Great Fish Community Challenge launch party on July 25th at First Interstate Bank of Whitefish to help celebrate the start of this important fundraising and awareness campaign. The Whitefish Community Foundation annual charitable giving campaign is designed to maximize donations to participating charities. The Whitefish Lake Institute is proud to be a participant in the 2019 Challenge which runs through the summer months, ending on September 13th at 5:00 pm. The Whitefish Community Foundation works hard to maximize *(continued on Page 3)...*

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Founded in 2005

The Whitefish Lake Institute is committed to science, education, and aquatic resource initiatives to protect and improve Whitefish Lake and Whitefish area water resources today, while providing a collective vision for tomorrow.

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*Whitefish Lake and The Lodge
at Whitefish Lake Marina*

**Summer Internship Ends
By Graham Friedman**

Whitefish Lake Institute exemplifies commitment to an important cause, and I'm grateful to Mike, Cynthia and Lori for letting me join them this summer to learn about all that they do. I've gained a new appreciation for the challenges of managing and funding a nonprofit, conducting research on something as broad and understudied as the Flathead's waters, and the risks which a changing climate and human development pose to these ecosystems. I'm sure I'll find my experiences this summer to be invaluable professionally and academically.

A highlight of my time at WLI has been the diversity of work in which I've been able to participate. In addition to helping with WLI's initiatives, I have worked with River Design Group; Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks; USGS and city employees. From this, I've gained a well-rounded appreciation for the many ways that local organizations look after our natural resources. And in gaining this appreciation, I was struck by the wide-ranging, collaborative involvement of WLI: though I'd read about their work before this summer, it's become clear that their involvement and influence spreads beyond Whitefish Lake and our town, and often benefits or is benefitted by other groups in the valley.

I have also been amazed by the following and support shown by the people of Whitefish for WLI. The donations, partnerships and informal connections which allow WLI to be so well integrated into the community are, I believe, a product of its track record. It's clear that the team at WLI does everything they can to preserve the health of Whitefish Lake and the other lakes which they monitor (and there are a lot!). They're efficient, and that's because they share a certain humility; there is an absence of any need for recognition and a willingness to work hard with the knowledge that it's benefitting an important cause.

It's really quite incredible how much a team so small as that of WLI accomplishes, and how diverse their engagements are. I feel fortunate to have experienced so much under the guidance of Mike, Cynthia and Lori, and I'm eager to use all that I've learned in the coming years. Thank you, Whitefish Lake Institute, for a formative and fun summer!



Jette Lake volunteer Pat Nowlen and WLI intern Graham Friedman from Harvard University row out to the Jette Lake sample site.

(Great Fish Community Challenge con't from Page 1...) donations to participating nonprofits by awarding an additional percentage match from its own Great Fish Fund. The match percentage varies annually, but all gifts make an even greater impact when combined with the matching grant. The Great Fish Community Challenge benefits nonprofits by promoting mission awareness and inspiring community involvement. Participation in the Challenge is free for nonprofits and the Whitefish Community Foundation covers all administrative fees.

The campaign culminates with a Color Run and Community Celebration in Depot Park on September 7th. Register to walk or run in the Great Fish Color Run where participants will be covered in a non-toxic colored powder throughout the race (color can be bypassed for those who want to remain clean). Visit WLI's and other nonprofit booths where there will be entertaining and interactive displays where you can learn more about all our missions and how our work benefits the Whitefish Community. And there will be great entertainment throughout the morning. We hope to see you there!! Don't forget to leave the evening of October 10th open to attend the Great Fish Community Challenge Grant Awards Presentation. There will be a pre-event party at Casey's at 5:00 PM. Followed by the presentation at the Performing Arts Center at 6:00 PM.



WLI Science & Education Director, Lori Curtis, shows a youngster some aquatic insects at the 2018 Whitefish Community Foundation Great Fish Community Challenge Color Run and Community Celebration.

Science Quencher: *Quenching your thirst for science*
SAVE THE DATE! The Whitefish Lake Institute is hosting its first Science Quencher on Friday, September 27th from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Firebrand Hotel in the mezzanine event space. We'll be serving complimentary appetizers, beer, and wine, and offering a handful of 5-minute "lightening round" style talks from local science experts. Join us for a fun and lively gathering.

Education Programs

On May 23, WLI hosted its annual Fifth Grade educational field trip at the Living Wetlands Interpretive Nature Trail. This year we had six hands-on learning stations, including: Aquatic Insects, Field Journaling, Fish Dissection, Plant ID, Rolling Rivers, and Wild Wings Recovery Center. WLI's Science & Education Director also helped Whitefish Legacy Partners with their annual 3rd grader program at the Lion Mountain Learning Pavilion in May. In June, WLI's Executive Director and Science & Education Coordinator hosted a visit from about 40 National Guard members for an educational tour of the Living Wetlands Interpretive Nature Trail.

Thank You Wetland Volunteers!!

WLI had some amazing help at our restoration area in the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve in June. First, we'd like to thank Megan Chaisson and her wonderful 7th grade students who came out to help remove plant cages from the restoration area. They worked hard and fast and made a big dent in sorely needed plant enclosure removal. WLI also thanks the terrific group of volunteers from Fresh Life Church for an incredibly productive day of work in the restoration area. By the end of the day, we had removed all the remaining plant enclosures.

Lake Volunteer Program

WLI released its 2018 Northwest Montana Volunteer Monitoring Network (NWMTLVMN) Summary Report. It can be found on the NWMTLVMN.org website or the WLI website under "News & Publications" in the "Reports" section. The report summarizes the work conducted by WLI's Science & Education Coordinator, Cynthia Ingelfinger and program volunteers on 41 lakes in northwest Montana. The program is a partnership between WLI and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks with a mission to recruit and train citizen scientist volunteers to monitor water quality, identify and report Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) and promote watershed stewardship in Northwest Montana. WLI was also awarded a contract from the Department of Natural Resources & Conservation to expand volunteer efforts and build the Upper Columbia Lake Network (UCLN). Through this two-year contract, WLI will engage, train, and equip new volunteer groups within the Montana portion of the Upper Columbia Basin.

Summer Photos



(Lori Curtis: Science & Education Director, WLI; Tom Woolf: AIS Bureau Chief, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks; Governor Steve Bullock; Stephanie Hester, Invasive Species Program Manager, Department of Natural Resources & Conservation; Willis Curdy: Representative, House District 98) at the Ravalli Watercraft Inspection Station to kick-off the busy 4th of July weekend.



WLI partnered with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks for a Beaver Lake Eurasian Watermilfoil eradication effort. New plants were discovered in 2019 and were promptly removed. Bottom barriers were placed over the suction dredged areas to block out sunlight for any remaining plants. A follow up survey will be conducted by the partners in August.



Lake volunteer Joann Fleming with a Van Dorn water sampler.



Fresh Life Church volunteers in the wetland restoration area.



Megan Chaisson and her 7th graders in the wetland restoration area.



Lake volunteers Michelle Butz and Sue Corrigan on Tetrault Lake near Eureka.

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