



# LakeFront

Quarterly Newsletter of the Whitefish Lake Institute

Winter 2023

## WLI Welcomes New Board Member

Todd H. Votteler, Ph.D. is President of Collaborative Water Resolution LLC. He is a co-founder and the Editor-in-Chief of the *Texas Water Journal*, and Editor-in-Chief of *Texas+Water*. Votteler is a Fellow of the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University.

Previously, Votteler was Executive Manager of Science, Intergovernmental Relations, and Policy at the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority. He also served as the Chairman of the Guadalupe Basin Coalition.

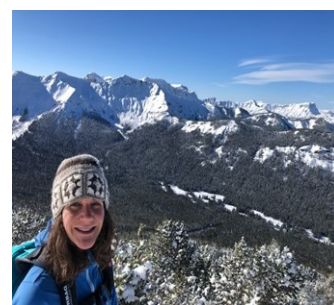
Votteler was appointed by Senior U.S. District Court Judge Lucius Bunton as the Federal Special Master for the Endangered Species Act (ESA) litigation, *Sierra Club v. San Antonio*. Prior to that he assisted a Federal Court Monitor during the landmark ESA litigation over the Edwards Aquifer, *Sierra Club v. Babbitt*. In 2013, he was part of a group awarded the Partners for Conservation Award by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell for work that resolved a water dispute over the Texas Edwards Aquifer. In addition, Votteler negotiated an agreement to resolve a dispute over surface water and the endangered whooping crane. His previous experience also includes Research (continued on Page 3...)



Todd Votteler, Ph.D

## WLI Hires Program Coordinator

Durae Belcer joined the Whitefish Lake Institute at the start of 2023. Prior to this she spent 20 years working for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks protecting and monitoring native trout populations on the Flathead River and Yellowstone River watersheds. Most recently she worked with the wildlife division monitoring sensitive species of amphibians, reptiles, and birds. Durae holds a degree in Environmental Science from the State University of New York at Plattsburgh. (continued on Page 3...)



Durae Belcer

## Inside this issue of LakeFront—

WLI Welcomes New Board Member.....	1
WLI Hires Program Coordinator.....	1
Montana Lakes Conference Announced.....	2
Ripple Effect Scholarship.....	3
Summer Internship Opportunity.....	3
Wetland Trail—Seasonal Closure.....	3
Winter Photos.....	4
WLI Supporters.....	5
Become a WLI Member.....	6

Back issues of LakeFront available at [www.whitefishlake.org](http://www.whitefishlake.org)



A 501 (c)(3) Nonprofit Corporation

Gold  
Transparency  
2023

Candid.

**Whitefish Lake Institute**  
550 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street #103  
Whitefish, MT 59937

Voice: 406.862.4327  
info@whitefishlake.org  
www.whitefishlake.org

***Founded in 2005***

### **Mission Statement**

*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 community vision for tomorrow.*

### **Board of Directors**

Andy Feury, President  
Hank Ricklefs, Vice President  
John Collins, Secretary/Treasurer  
Brian Averill  
John Muhlfeld  
Monica Pastor  
Debbie Pierson  
Mitch Robinson  
Camisha Sawtelle  
Todd Votteler  
Jim Williams

### **Science Advisory Committee**

Sam Bourret, co-chair  
Ryan Richardson, co-chair  
Megan Chaisson  
Paul McKenzie  
Eric Sawtelle  
Erin Sexton  
John Wachsmuth

### **Staff**

Mike Koopal: Founder, Executive Director  
Carol Treadwell, Ph.D: Finance & Grants Manager  
Durae Belcer: Program Coordinator

**LakeFront** is published quarterly by the  
Whitefish Lake Institute

Cover Photo:  
*Aerial view of a past Whitefish Winter Carnival  
Penguin Plunge at City Beach*  
Courtesy: gravityshots.com



## **Montana Lakes Conference Announced**



Building upon the success of the inaugural Montana Lakes Conference in 2019, the Whitefish Lake Institute (WLI) is pleased to again organize and host the Montana Lakes Conference October 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The theme for the 2023 Montana Lakes Conference is "Montana Lakes at Risk; Challenges and Opportunities." The conference will gather participants from academic, nonprofit, government, business organizations, and the public to discuss scientific and applied studies relevant to Montana's Lakes. The conference will also highlight solutions and success stories brought about through best management practices, policy, and citizen led conservation efforts.

The conference will be held at The Lodge at Whitefish Lake. Developed to exchange knowledge, ideas and experiences, and to introduce new approaches to help manage and protect our lakes, the conference will celebrate Montana's lakes and the people who work to understand and protect them. Attendees will have the opportunity to immerse themselves in innovative, practical, and applied lake management techniques and current research. Networking opportunities will allow attendees with varied experiences to compare notes and collaborate on important lake management issues.

The conference will kick-off on the afternoon of Wednesday, October 18<sup>th</sup> with a workshop on the topic of water conflict management and transformation led by Aaron Woolf, a professor at Oregon State University, and Todd Votteler, WLI's newest board member. Aaron and Todd are water mitigation experts from fourworlds.org and the four hour workshop will provide continuing education credits for professionals.

The workshop will be followed by a student poster session "Why We Love Whitefish Lake" and our Science Quencher highlighting lightening talks from select conference speakers on the evening of Wednesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, both of which are free and open to the public.

Thursday and Friday will feature keynote and plenary speakers along with break-out sessions covering various lake management projects and issues. Included, will be presentations from community led lake conservation efforts and citizen science programs.

Join WLI at one of Montana's premier conference and lodging facilities—the award-winning Lodge at Whitefish Lake—for a forum that will strengthen Montana's lake resource management. For more information, please visit [www.whitefishlake.org](http://www.whitefishlake.org) and click on the banner on the home page. Conference registration opens April 1<sup>st</sup>. We hope to see you there!

**(WLI Welcomes New Board Member), continued from Page 1)**...Scientist for the Battelle – Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, in Washington, D.C., Executive Director of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust, a 501(c)3 land and water trust, and Chairman of the Texas Land Trust Council.

Todd has a B.S. in Natural Resources from The University of the South, an M.S. in Natural Resources from The University of Michigan, and a Ph.D. in Environmental Geography from Texas State University.

**(WLI Hires Program Coordinator), continued from Page 1)**...She has also attended classes at the Flathead Lake Biological Station in stream and aquatic ecology to further diversify her knowledge on the importance of water quality in and around the Flathead Valley.

Durae looks forward to supporting the long-term monitoring and protection of the Whitefish Lake watershed through citizen science programs, and community outreach and education. As one of her main duties, she will be coordinating the Northwest Montana Lakes Network which engages volunteers to monitor water quality and conduct early detection surveys for aquatic invasive species on 41 lakes in northwestern Montana. The program is a partnership with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

In her free time, Durae can be found on skis, bike, or foot exploring the mountains and lakes in the northwest with her adventurous husband and trusty horse.

## Ripple Effect Scholarship

WLI offers three types of scholarship opportunities to qualified students. The scholarship program can award students in three categories including 1) a \$500 scholarship for tuition to a high school student as they enter college, 2) an internship (see below) for an undergraduate student in the summer after their sophomore or junior year, and 3) WLI's support of a graduate thesis or dissertation. Appropriate courses of study for consideration in the scholarship program include: biology, ecology, environmental science/studies, hydrology, or other fields related to water quality as approved by WLI staff. For more information, see our website [www.whitefishlake.org](http://www.whitefishlake.org) under *Education Programs*. The **deadline for applications is April 15**.

## Summer Internship Opportunity

One of the most important aspects of WLI's educational programming is to encourage and mentor students. WLI has hosted college interns dating back to 2007. Thanks to our Ripple Effect Scholarship Fund, a \$2,500 stipend towards tuition is awarded to an undergraduate university student who completes a successful summer internship with WLI.

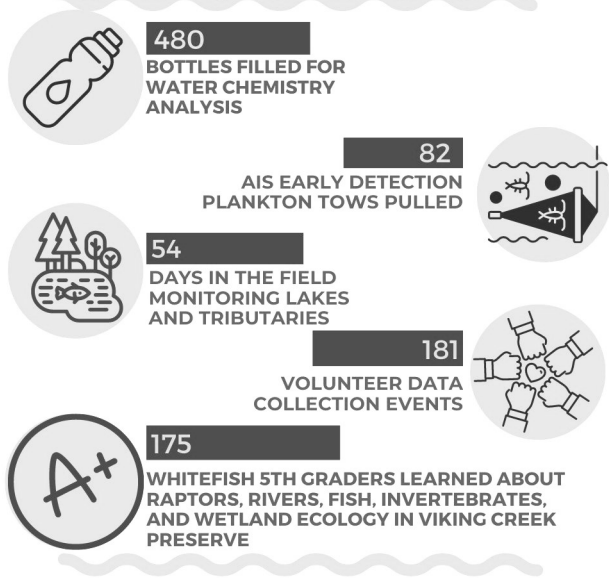
WLI interns learn about streams, rivers and lakes, watershed processes, limnological data collection, and data processing and analysis. The intern also learns about—and participates in—the daily functioning of a small non-profit corporation. WLI attempts to match the intern with special projects that are in their interest area. One intern can be accepted each summer. Internship **applications are due March 15**. To learn more about the internship and application process, please visit [www.whitefishlake.org](http://www.whitefishlake.org).

## Wetland Trail— Seasonal Closure

We hope you are enjoying your treks at the Living Wetlands Interpretive Nature Trail in the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve! Please remember we are nearing the annual **March 15 to May 1 trail closure**. This closure will help maintain the structural integrity of the trail, protect native vegetation, and avoid potential spring wildlife/human conflicts. Until then, enjoy your winter walks along the trail.

In late May, WLI will host all 5th graders from Whitefish and Kalispell at the wetlands. Students will have an opportunity to engage with natural resource professionals at various learning stations to learn more about the processes, organisms, and management of the natural world.

## WLI ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY THE NUMBERS-2022





## Winter Photos

The trail cameras in the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve continue to demonstrate the importance of protecting this area in the wildland-urban interface. The area is rich in biodiversity with many species using the wetland habitat the entire year.



*Pine martens are skilled climbers but seen here hunting on the ground for rodents. They also eat fruits and insects.*



*A mountain lion is captured moving swiftly through the preserve. These felines have excellent hearing and vision.*



*Great horned owls are rarely seen due to their nocturnal habits and excellent camouflage. Their short wide wing span allow them to maneuver among the trees of the forest.*



*Elk are typically seen grazing in large open meadows, but this young bull elk is seen browsing on shrubs and other plants in the preserve's mixed coniferous forest.*



*A white-tail buck surveys the forest looking for a mate during breeding season. The trail cameras are always full of deer photos.*



*In preparation for the Montana Lakes Conference, WLI staff conducted a walk through at The Lodge at Whitefish Lake. They stopped for an official staff photo at the Valentine's Day photo booth!*

# Whitefish Lake Institute Supporters

Active Members who have donated for 10+ years since 2005.  
Active Members who have donated for 5-9 years since 2005.

Sustainer (\$20,000 and above)			
The Lodge At Whitefish Lake-Averill Family			
		Fellow (\$5,000 and above)	
Collins, John & Anne Foley Family Charitable Foundation Gregory, Joe & Cindy	Hoag, Jim & Anna Jones, Bill & Ann Pastor, Monica	Schlinger Family Foundation Shaw, Mike & Marie Shennan, Janna & Jamie	Taylor, Don & Ruth The Ammon Foundation Whisler, Steve & Ardy
		Guarantor (\$1,000 to \$4,999)	
Abell, Charlie & Susan Atkinson, Richard & Carol Blake, Rick & Alicia Brisler, Tara & Matthew Burke-Feldman Family Fund Gardner, Keith and Lindsey Gordon, Richard & Cheryl Watkins	Grenier, Charles & Teresa Gustafson, Mike Ila B. Dousman Fund, Inc. Investech Research- Jim & Lisa Stack LaTourelle, Pat Lyman, Charles & Becky McCann, Paul & Janice	Muhlfeld, John & Stephanie Sunshine Nelson, Marilyn & Rick Quinn, Tom & Teresa Raudabaugh, Joseph & Beverly Reich, Victoria River Design Group Rowntree, Walter & Laura Reynolds	Ryan, Bill & Bev Sullivan, Rick and Judi Valner, Alberto and Stacy Votteler, Todd Whitefish County Water District Whitefish Credit Union Young, Alison
		Visionary (\$500 to \$999)	
Bannigan, Thomas and Louise Blair, Ric & Dawn Bulkley, Brad & Ann Campbell, Luther & Dorothy Cleveland, Gail & Bruce Tannehill Covey, Mike & Stacey Cowett, Mark & Connie	Erickson, Bart & Carole First Interstate Bank Fleming, Don & Joann Forestration, Inc. Glacier Bank Houston Point HOA Jenson, Mike & Barb	Kramer Family Fund Lion Mountain Homeowners Mance, Mark & Katie Callahan Mayo, Janet Montalban, Cora Belle Peace Waters Repke, John & Beth	Richardson, Ryan Ricklefs, Hank & Sue Salt, Deb & Tim Shanti, Shima Solberg, Dick & Jane Steck, Ann Stinson Family Foundation
		Benefactor (\$250 to \$499)	
637 Nature Trail, LLC Anderson, Julie Anderson-Montgomery Consulting Engineers Averill, Brian & Fabienne Averill, Sean Bailey, Michael & Kathleen Bayne, Bill & Betsy Blake, Cameron & Sandy Gray Bryan, Kirk Bucher, Charles and Sandra Casey, Maureen Center For Native Plants Daniels, Matt & Kate	Dietz, Susie DM Miller Properties, LLC Fletcher, Greg Fletcher, Sue Frost, Michael & Patti Grady, Dave & Linda Engh-Grady Hauf, Ron Haymon, Robert & Barbara Krausekhopf Heinrich, Klaus & Joaquenia Hildner, Richard & Suzanne Daniell Johannes, Amy Koopal, Jack Koopal, Mike & Mae	Kovachik Family Trust Little Bitterroot Lake Association Losleben, George & Connie Johnson Lyon, Lawrence & Yvette Meagher, Nathan and Kristy Merrick, Colleen Monzingo, Betty Nelson, Leif and Gloria Nelson's Ace Hardware North Country Builders, Inc. PHELPS, John & Melissa Ritter, William and Kristen Robinson, Mitch & Jennifer	Robitzski, Steven Salvagio, Philip Schultz, Ralph Scott, Peter & Lori Asplund Scott, Toby Short, Dan & Kim Sutter, Ronald & Margo Svennungsen, Nancy & Mark Vandermeer, Janet & Rick Packard Walls, Stephanie Watershed Consulting, LLC Whitefish Marine & Powersports
		Leader (\$100 to \$249)	
Abell, Koel & Lazette Abell, Tarn & Marybeth Akey, Lin and Kathy Anderes, Elise & Stefan Appelgren, Brent Bauch, Duane & Valerie Bennett, Bob & Caryl Brueggeman, John Chadwick, Doug & Karen Reeves Chauner-Niendorf, Cyndi Christian, Steve & Doreen Coyne, Wendy Cuffe, Mick & Lanette Curtis, Kitty & Stewart Stadler Curtis, Walt & Lori Dakin, William & Sarah Danczyk, Gary & Annell Dennis, Ian & Antonia Malchik Eckert, Will Elser, Monica & Jim Ennis, Felicia Erickson Torgerson, Courtney Flag Nor Fail, Inc. Follett, Doug & Ann	Gersh, Judah & Tanya Graf, Dick and Gayle Gunderson, Greg & Catherine Gunderson, Karen Harding, Tom & Sue Hartman, Dewey & Sandra Heinzig, Dennis & Iona McMillan Hoppes, Tobin & Molly Ingelfinger, Franz & Cynthia Jordan, Wink & Joy Kibbe, Jim & Marion King, John & Maureen Knechtel, Murray & Deb Bartlett Koopal, Craig & Ann Koopal, Steve & Debbie Longley Labrie, Bill & Alice LaChance, Tom & Cindy Larson, Steven & Karen Lieser, Ed & Susan Lull, Steve Malletta, Sue & Joe Martin, David & Lynne Metcalfe McCartney, Sierra & Brett Svetlik McDermid, David	McIntyre, Curt & Sherry McMahon, Kate & Bob Horne Mechem, Jim and Jean Anne Swope Menicke, Richard & Jennifer Asebrook Miller, Ronald and Jean Moll, Sue & Gaylen Moore, Pixie Moore, Shawna & Jamie Morgan, Devonna Morrison, Sharon National Parks Realty Of Montana LLC Neff, Samuel & Ruth Olson, Ron & Linda Paslawsky, Andrew & Kim Sands Patterson, James & Lari Peschel, John & Laura Pierson, Debbie & Mike Ridenour, Ron Roosa, Karl & Elaine Rothberg, Marty Rowles, Roger & Val Konnerup Sanderude, Scott and Julie Sawtelle, Bill & Linda Sawtelle, Cami	Schott, Brian & Lyndsay Schroeter, Franklin Schuber, Charlie & Nancy Sheffels, Marcia Shors, Heidi & Andy Small, Lindy and Stephen Shapiro Smith, Garry and Linda Stadler, Martha Stearns, Chuck & Rita Steitz, John & Carol Treadwell Strand, Tim and Sukey Pfirman The Landlord The Simple Chef Catering Theissen, Dennis & Ginger Tim J. Murphy Insurance Agency, Inc. Trifunovich, Dragi Trousdale, David & Jeannine VanKoten, Doug Ward, Diane Whitefish Lake Golf Club Whitefish Lake Restaurant Williams, Amy & Timothy Williams, Jim and Melora Woodruff, Nancy & Steve Thompson
		Sponsor (\$50 to \$99)	
Apanii-Butterfly Aronsson, Peter & Cheri Askevold, Gerald & Sally Jo Balaska, Teri Baldwin, Matt & Sadie Baldwin, Michael Bansak, Tom & Anne Baracker, Jerry and Sharan Barham, Michael & Kristi Behron, LLC Birch Hills Homes Bisharat, Ibrahim & Martha Bruzek, Bill & Judie Burg, Bill & Kay Chaisson, Megan Chauner, Linda Cohen, Connie Corwin, Bill & Christina Cox, Besty & Woody Crites, Andy & Wendy Daniels, Scott & Karen DeHerrera, Jimmy & Michaelan Eckstrom, Andy & Jennie	Ericson, Dave and Sarah Fanning, Michael & Jill Ferrington, Alan & Joyce Flathead Urology- Dr. Jon Mercer Garside, Susan Gehri, Richard & Glenda Gordon, Rob & Karin Hilding Griesel, Doug & Rebecca Briber Haller, Bruce & Kaye Harrison, Gil & Ruth Hartlieb, John & Kathi Hartman, Greg Hartman, Melissa Henry, Emilie Hobson, Carmen Hodge, Bill Holdhusen, Chris Holmquist, Brett Holt, Mark & Chris Hope, Kendra Howard, Trevor and Kacy Hunt, Leslie & Will Huston, Mary	Hyer, Gary & Jill Johnson, Claudine Joly, Steven Jopek, Mike & Pam Gerwe Kavanagh, John Keane, Leo and Gail Leonard Kemp, Craig & Holly Kirk, Phil & Lesia Kohnstamm, Betsy & Dan Kuhl, Tanner & Stephanie Larsen, Arnold & Karen Lawson, Bob & Dyan Lewensohn, Leonard and Carol Lewis, Casey Linne, Gail Love, William & Catherine Madler, Marianne Magone, Larry & Barb Manning, Brian & Denise Moore, John & Janice Morse, Craig Olson, Scott and Amy O'Neil, Christy	Paone, Robin Paul Moffatt Construction Pearce, Bryan and Danielle Powers, Mary Drew Regev, Nir & Cherie Richards, R Peter Ronseth, Shirley Ruffatto, Chris Smart, Mike & Timmie Smith, Dana Smith, Will & Bonnie Southers, Merry Lynn Sramek, Joseph & Deanne Streeter, Mike & Bonnie Sullivan, Colleen Van Lawick, Marisa Vars, Tom & Caroline Verdon, Paul & Colleen Vine, Tagan Whitby, William & Karen Wilson, John & Marjorie Woodward, Brian Zeisse, Jivan
		Current Grantors & Research Funders	
Cadeau Foundation City of Whitefish	Flathead Conservation District Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks	Montana Invasive Species Council / MT DNRC Upper Columbia Conservation Commission	Whitefish County Water District Whitefish Community Foundation





# Whitefish Lake INSTITUTE

550 East 1st Street #103  
Whitefish, MT 59937



## Whitefish Lake Institute Membership Coupon

**Yes!** Please enroll my membership in the Whitefish Lake Institute, and send me the quarterly newsletter *LakeFront* to keep me informed of the current projects underway and issues being addressed by the Whitefish Lake Institute.

☐ My check is enclosed

☐ Visa  ☐ MasterCard  ☐ Discover 

Account #:

Expires: \_\_\_\_\_ 3-digit CVV code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Please check your membership category:

- |                                     |                    |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainer  | \$20,000 and above |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fellow     | \$5,000            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guarantor  | \$1,000            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visionary  | \$500              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$250              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leader     | \$100              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor    | \$50               |

Gold  
Transparency  
2023

Candid.

***Your Contribution is 100% tax-deductible.***

501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation



Whitefish Lake Institute ♦ 550 East 1st Street #103 ♦ Whitefish, MT 59937

Voice: 406-862-4327 ♦ Fax: 406-862-0686

[www.whitefishlake.org](http://www.whitefishlake.org)

### Great Gift Ideas from WLI-

visit our website  
[www.whitefishlake.org](http://www.whitefishlake.org)  
or stop by the office to  
get a bumper sticker,  
various publications,  
a map, and other items.

