

LakeFront

Quarterly Newsletter of the Whitefish Lake Institute

Spring 2023



The Montana Lakes Conference is an important platform for generating solutions to water quality challenges faced by Whitefish Lake and other lakes in Montana. The conference, taking place October 18 – 20, 2023 at The Lodge at Whitefish Lake, will bring together scientists, managers, policy makers, and citizens for 2.5 days. Presentations given by experts in the fields of lake and reservoir science, aquatic invasive species, water pollutants, recreational impacts, development impacts, climate change, and water supply. WLI anticipates 200 attendees, 40 speakers, a robust poster session, and keynote and plenary sessions. The conference will celebrate Montana's lakes and the people who work to understand and protect them.

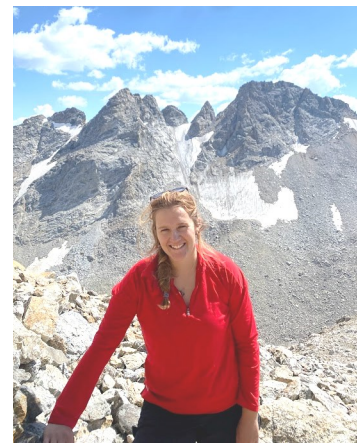
Andrew Sansom Ph.D., will deliver the conference keynote address. He is the Founder & Professor of Practice at The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment in Texas. Dr. Sansom is a leading conservationist in the management and protection of natural resources and is a recipient of conservation awards from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the National Park Foundation, the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the Nature Conservancy.

Jim Elser Ph.D., Director of the Flathead Lake Biological Station, will present a plenary. *(continued on Page 2...)*

WLI Hires Limnologist

Cassie Roberts is joining the Whitefish Lake Institute on June 1, 2023 as a Limnologist. Limnology is the study of the biological, chemical, and physical features of lakes and other bodies of fresh water. Prior to WLI, Cassie received a Masters in Biology at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY.

There she worked with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection to help ensure the safety of drinking water in their Catskill Reservoirs. She also *(continued on Page 2...)*



Cassie Roberts

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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.

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Cover Photo:
Whitefish Lake and the Whitefish Range
Courtesy: gravityshots.com



(Montana Lakes Conference), continued from Page 1)... Jim was recently inducted into the prestigious National Academy of Sciences and is only the second Montanan to achieve this honor.

A preconference workshop will be offered on Wednesday, October 18th titled: "Water Conflict Management & Transformation" lead by Aaron Wolf, Ph.D. and Todd Votteler, Ph.D. from fourworlds.org. Four Worlds is dedicated to the positive transformation of our relationship to the world's water and works to build healthy relationships and outcomes through scientific mediation, capacity building, and technical assessment. Water professionals and the public are encouraged to register for this meaningful training workshop. The four-hour workshop will provide continuing education credits for professionals.

The conference will officially open with a Community Night and Conference Welcome Reception Wednesday evening. The evening will include a Youth Poster Session with presenters from local middle and high schools, and the popular WLI Science Quencher featuring lightning round talks from experts that will be presenting at the conference. The Youth Poster Session and the Science Quencher are free and open to the public.

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, or to register or submit an abstract, please visit www.whitefishlake.org and click on the conference banner on the home page. WLI is currently seeking speakers, exhibitors, and sponsors to fill the conference agenda.

(WLI Hires Limnologist), continued from Page 1)... participated in long term monitoring programs on three lakes located in the Pennsylvania Poconos. Cassie has worked in Grand Junction Colorado doing riparian vegetation monitoring along the Colorado, Dolores, and Gunnison rivers. Prior to that she worked on a roving trail crew throughout Arizona and Utah for the Arizona conservation corps. Cassie also attended Elizabethtown College in eastern Pennsylvania where she played field hockey and dual majored in Environmental Science and French. Cassie was born and raised in Maine where her lifelong love of lakes began. She spent many summers swimming and exploring in Baxter State Park in northern Maine, where she fostered a love for the outdoors. Cassie is looking forward to researching and protecting Whitefish lake and getting to know this exciting community. In her free time, Cassie enjoys hiking, swimming and running.

Editor's note—

Adding a limnologist at WLI will make us more efficient at synthesizing data to better communicate the health of local waterbodies to the community. It is WLI's focus to let science guide the conversation at the decision making level. This position will help inform best management practices and policies to ensure a clean and healthy Whitefish Lake for all of us today, and into the future.

Spring Science Quencher Recap

WLI hosted a Science Quencher on Friday April 21st at the Lodge at Whitefish Lake. Attendees enjoyed short talks from local science professionals and complimentary beer, wine, and appetizers. Wendy Cole, a wolf management specialist for northwest Montana with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, shared her research work on wolf dispersals and home range characteristics of wolves in northwest Montana. Christina Relyea, a professor in the natural resource conservation and management program at FVCC, shared her students research projects on ponderosa pine in the Flathead Valley. Paul Travis, with the Flathead Land Trust, provided information on the Owen Sowerwine property and it's benefits to open space and quality interconnected habitat along the Flathead River. Chris Peterson, editor and photographer for the Hungry Horse News, showed a short clip of his most recent film "Winter Song." The presenter's energy and expertise will help foster a better appreciation for the sciences, conservation, their surroundings, and the Whitefish Lake Institute. Thanks to you all, the event was a great success with over 40 attendees!



Mike Koopal provided introductory remarks at the Science Quencher.

Ripple Effect Scholarship Recipient

Nate Ingelfinger is the 2023 recipient of the Whitefish Lake Institute Ripple Effect Scholarship. Nate will attend the Honors College at Montana State University and intends to major in Environmental Science. Nate maintained a 4.0 GPA while participating in various school clubs and activities including National Honors Society, FREEFLOW (a field science club), and Leo Club (a community volunteer club). Nate was also captain of the track and cross country teams and volunteered with Beyond the Boundaries Mountain Bike Camp, teaching kids bike skills and maintenance. He was also a member of the Glacier Nordic Club's ski racing team for the last five years.



Nate hiking a slot canyon in southern Utah.

2023 Summer Intern

-by Niko Hunter

Hello Whitefish Lake Institute supporters! My name is Niko Hunter, and I am a Montana local who spent the entirety of my primary education in the Whitefish School District, building a deep connection with the Whitefish Lake watershed and the surrounding natural spaces throughout the course of my childhood. Rafting, skiing, mountaineering, backpacking, and flyfishing are some of my favorite activities, and spending my formative years in the wilderness has instilled within me a deep passion for environmental advocacy and preservation. Witnessing gradually warming winters, increasingly extreme fire seasons, and the eutrophication of Whitefish Lake first hand inspired me to pursue a degree in Sustainable Development at Columbia University in the city of New York, where I am currently taking courses in practical sciences, environmental policy, and the intersection between sustainability and social equity. I am incredibly excited to work with the Whitefish Lake Institute over the coming summer, as it will provide me with the invaluable opportunity to gain firsthand experience working with an environmental non-profit. Not only will I gain highly practical field skills and general knowledge, but truly absorbing myself within every aspect of the organization will give me



Niko in New York's Central Park.

the opportunity to carry their values forward, using my voice to inspire further progress towards sustainability and watershed restoration in Whitefish and beyond. I have so much love and gratitude for the community and surrounding landscapes that helped shape me into who I am today, and I am beyond thrilled for the opportunity to join Whitefish Lake Institute's amazing team for the summer. Here's to preserving our watershed for generations to come!

Editor's Note—

WLI interns learn about streams, rivers and lakes, watershed processes, limnological data collection, and data processing and analysis. The intern learns about—and participates in—the daily functioning of a small non-profit corporation. Interns also spend time job shadowing members of the Science Advisory Committee and other WLI partners.

Spring Photos



Durae Belcer lowers a Hydrolab which measures physical water quality parameters from the surface to the bottom of the lake.



Durae Belcer checking a GPS waypoint on Haskill Creek. WLI staff inventoried the stream looking for invasive curly-leaf pondweed.



Visit the Whitefish Lake Institute office to buy Whitefish Lake ball caps or winter stocking caps.



Carol Treadwell displaying the 2019 Montana Lakes Conference Program. She's busy organizing the 2023 conference.



City of Whitefish Community Services Coordinator Carla Belski at the Preventative Decontamination Station which opened May 1.



Wendy Cole, a Wolf Management Specialist for Montana FWP, presented information about wolves at the April Science Quencher.

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