



Contact Us at 406-677-0069

NOVEMBER 2019

# Clearwater

## PARTNERS

## Successful 2019 Sampling Season



Volunteer David Page preparing AIS sample collected on Lake Inez

### Mussel Free!

We are very pleased to report that after this year's monitoring season, no invasive mussels were detected in our Chain of Lakes! This summer was the 10th year of local efforts by CRC and our wonderful team of volunteers to monitor our high risk lakes for zebra and quagga mussels. We monitored 6 lakes from mid-July through mid-September, collecting samples four times from each lake. FWP is sampling and searching for mussels with dogs and divers on Tiber and Canyon Ferry also produced no positive results. With only one suspicious result in 2016 and three years of negative results, Canyon Ferry is now eligible to be delisted. Tiber Reservoir had multiple positive detects in 2016 and will need to be negative for 5 years before becoming eligible to be delisted. Even with this encouraging news, it is important to continue to take a proactive approach to protecting our waters. This year, across the state of Montana, 14 mussel-fouled watercraft were identified at the inspection stations and over 100 were transporting aquatic weeds. Thank you to our volunteers. We can always use more!

### A Note from CRC President, Jon Haufler

As our seasons are changing, so is the CRC. In early September CRC Executive Director made an abrupt announcement that he was resigning his position. This put a number of on-going activities in precarious positions. With help from the Board of Directors, we addressed the immediate needs. Fortunately, fate was smiling on us, as we were able to quickly fill the Executive Director (ED) position with a highly qualified individual. Caryn Miske was our top candidate when we last advertised our ED position but was unable to accept at that time due to some other on-going obligations. With those obligations met, she was now available to fill CRC's ED position. We are very excited to have Caryn in this new role and welcome her to CRC.

Another change is that McKenzie Schessl, our Big Sky Watershed Corps member for this past year, is completing her term with us in mid-November. McKenzie has done a great job this past year helping coordinate and assist with our aquatics program. So we are sending McKenzie off to the next phase of her career with a big thank you and best wishes for her continued success. We will have another Big Sky Watershed Corps member starting in early in 2020.

Our fuels mitigation work continues to proceed at a rapid pace. We have completed many projects this fall and have a good number of additional projects on-going or planned. We have additional grant money to support fuel mitigation work, so if you have work to be completed, please contact us.

Finally, we are conducting a concerted donor campaign over the rest of this year. With our many important programs, we continue to need your annual support to advance CRC's effectiveness as the organization devoted to natural resource conservation in Seeley Lake. Please keep us in mind as you consider your tax-deductible contributions this year.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving.

Jon Haufler

CLEARWATER RESOURCE COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

### Students in Action

The 2018-2019 school year for the Ecology class began with a unique outdoor exercise to survey the new gage on Morrell Creek. The former gage was irreparably damaged during the 2018 spring floods and replaced in late summer. The science classes have been measuring flow rates several times during the year and collecting water chemistry samples. CRC staff worked with the Ecology class weekly throughout the year to instruct them on organizing and evaluating the data to determine how much nitrogen and phosphorus are transported by Morrell Creek into our lake system.

### Year-End Giving

As we head into the holiday season, we encourage our members to consider giving a year-end, tax-deductible donation to CRC. Some of the programs most important to the community – such as water quality monitoring and Aquatic Invasive Species prevention efforts – are facing grave funding shortages in 2020. Support from our members is critical if we are to continue to fund these programs. Add us to your holiday giving list to protect the natural resources of the Valley!

# Clearwater

## PARTNERS

### Education and Outreach

This year our Big Sky Watershed Corps member, McKenzie, accompanied students from Seeley Lake and Condon Elementary schools on their SLE Outdoor Program education trips to Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks. These programs are designed to allow the children of the Clearwater Valley to receive hands-on experience exploring our beautiful wild landscape while learning about its unique history and rich environmental diversity. In the spring, a group of eighth graders took their annual trip down to YNP for a 4

day, 3 night camping excursion. On the way down, the students stopped at the Museum of the Rockies to learn about the indigenous people of the area and the geological history. One week earlier, a sixth grade group embarked on the first annual camping trip to West Glacier, GNP. These kiddos proved tough and adventurous on the club's pilot journey. This fall, a group of seventh graders explored East Glacier; learning about the rich indigenous peoples' history and their ties to GNP. CRC teamed up with SLE Outdoor Program to help students understand the importance of protecting this landscape and its rich natural resources.



SLE Outdoor Program sixth grade trip to west Glacier National Park with CRC member McKenzie Schessl in May 2019

### CRC Hires New Executive Director

CRC is pleased to welcome Caryn Miske as its new Executive Director. Miske will lead the organization in meeting its strategic goals, managing staff and existing programs, and facilitating development efforts aimed at meeting new challenges and opportunities facing the watershed. Miske comes to CRC with over two decades of experience in natural resources management, land use planning and policy analyses. Miske has held several management positions, including serving as the Executive Director of the Flathead Basin Commission (FBC) from 2006-2017. While there, Miske spearheaded the effort to permanently resolve the issue of proposed strip-mining development in British Columbia, thereby protecting the headwaters of the Flathead/Columbia River system in perpetuity. Among the responsibilities that Miske is expected to handle at CRC, one of the most pressing focus areas includes enhancing the existing fuels mitigation program. "Given the threat of increased frequency and severity of fires on the landscape, the fuel mitigation program is of great importance," Miske stated. Members are encouraged to send their ideas and concerns to the new Executive Director by emailing: [caryn@crcmt.org](mailto:caryn@crcmt.org).

CRC is extremely fortunate to have a wonderful team of volunteers who return year after year. If you would like to join the fun, please contact us at (406) 677-0069 or [info@crcmt.org](mailto:info@crcmt.org)

### Adopt-A-Lake

2019 was the 12th season for our Adopt-A-Lake program, with volunteers sampling eight lakes for water clarity and temperature twice a month. This program runs from May through September/October. This program provides us with a long term data set that can be used to track the health of our lakes over time.

### Adopt-A-Stream

Our Adopt-A-Stream program is dependent on our amazing citizen-science volunteers. This program runs from March

through June, with water chemistry samples being collected weekly to monitor stream health.

**Many of our sites require volunteers to snowshoe or ski into them for over half of the sampling season.**

This season we sampled 27 streams measuring nitrogen, phosphorus, turbidity (amount of "stuff" floating in the water) and stream depth. A huge thank you to our volunteers!

