

SPRING  
REVIEW  
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# CLEARWATER NEWS

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The Official Newsletter of the Clearwater Resource Council

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Photo by J. Harrits



Contact Us at 406-677-0069

CLEARWATER RESOURCE COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

# CLEARWATER NEWS

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## OUR MISSION:

The mission of the Clearwater Resource Council is to engage the community and facilitate efforts that will enhance, conserve, sustain, and protect the natural resources and rural lifestyle of the Clearwater Watershed for present and future generations.

## OUR GOALS:

- Build community capacity to resolve issues;
- Create opportunities for interaction among citizens, businesses and agencies;
- Build common ground by consensus process;
- Facilitate timely collection and dissemination of information;
- Enhance the understanding of cumulative effects of land management practices; and
- Develop and support responsible resource stewardship programs.



Caryn Miske,  
Executive Director



Jon Haufler,  
President and CRC  
co-founder

## Clearwater Resource Council

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## A LOOK BACK ON SPRING

Dear CRC members,

Spring is often a busy, transitional time of year. Migratory birds fly back from their winter homes. Families complete their annual spring cleaning. Pollinators and early-blooming native flowers simultaneously emerge and dot the landscape with a variety of colors.

Here at CRC, we are emerging from a busy spring filled with preparation for a summer Season. From welcoming 2 new aquatics techs and 4 new high school interns to planting over 50 species of pollinator plants in CRC's new garden, we are excited to see our projects and impact grow. Thank you, members for your continued support!



## CRC FEATURED IN A FILM AND PODCAST SERIES

CRC is among many organizations in Montana that are engaging with community collaborative landscape work. These organizations include Swan Valley Connections, a neighbor just North of Seeley Lake in Condon; Pyramid Mountain Lumber, a familiar organization in Seeley Lake; the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, a collaborator due West of the Mission Mountain range. CRC is lucky to be featured among these other organizations in a film titled "Life in the Land: The Seeley-Swan Region." The film is part of a documentary series and accompanying podcast series which "show(s) the positive effects of working in interconnected ways, just like the elements of a healthy ecosystem. It will prove the success of initiatives which are guided by local communities and the natural systems of the land." To watch the film or listen to the podcast, head to [www.lifeintheland.org](http://www.lifeintheland.org).





## "A PLACE TO BEE" ALL THE BUZZ ABOUT CRC'S NEW POLLINATOR GARDEN

You may hear a bit more buzzing around town this summer, especially if you find yourself enjoying an outdoor lunch at Lindey's Landing West Bayburgers. Why, you may ask. Well, it could be the sound of the jet skis whirling around on Seeley Lake or the cars zooming by on MT Hwy-83. Truth *bee*-told, the sound you are hearing is likely local pollinators making a *beeline* for CRC's new pollinator garden.

Located in the grass lot behind the Lindey's Steakhouse parking lot, the pollinator garden is outfitted with seven planter boxes that surround a solar water fountain. The planter boxes and the fountain were each graciously sponsored by a local Seeley Lake business. If you take a stroll through the garden, you will find over fifty different native plants. The Echinacea Purple Coneflower, for example, is known as a "must-have" for pollinator gardens. Its showy lavender flowers attract butterflies and bees from June all the way until late August. You may also find the flowers in a popular herbal tea which has been reported to help strengthen the immune system. Beyond being important pollinator plants, many of the native flowers also have cultural, medicinal, or nutritional significance. On your stroll through the garden, you may want to stop and read the labels that identify every plant. The labels will inform you of the plant's common name, its scientific name, and a short tidbit about its botanical, cultural, or medicinal significance. Perhaps you will find a flower that catches your eye or read about a plant that you have never heard of before. The CRC pollinator garden is a great place to learn more about plants native to the area. It's also a great spot to help you envision and plan out your own pollinator garden!



# Pollination

101

### What is pollination?

Pollination is the transfer of pollen from one flower to another, allowing for plant fertilization.

### Who are the pollinators?

Bees, bats, butterflies, moths, beetles, birds, and many other animals can be pollinators. The wind is also an important mechanism of pollination, blowing pollen from one flower to another.

### Why is pollination important?

Pollination is responsible for the reproduction of the vast majority of all flowering plants on our planet, and pollination is critical to our food supply. In fact, one out of every three bites of food you eat depends on pollination!

### What do people mean by pollinator decline?

The number of pollinators in our environment is on the decline. Loss of habitat, widespread pesticide use, and a changing climate are all threats to pollinators.

### How can we combat pollinator decline?

Plant your own pollinator garden! Adding pollinator plants to your garden increases pollinator habitat. Once flowers are planted, eliminate your use of pesticides.

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## "A PLACE TO BEE" (CONT.)

In hopes of sharing the joy of a new pollinator garden with the community, CRC hosted a Pollinator Garden Kickoff Celebration on Memorial Day Weekend. New friends and old friends stopped by to partake in a variety of pollinator-themed activities. Charles DeVoe, a member of Big Sky Beekeepers, gave a presentation on the ins and outs of beekeeping. From where to place a hive to how to manage a colony of bees, listeners marveled at the art and science of beekeeping. Later in the afternoon, Jean Pocha, a master gardener who writes for the Pathfinder, presented on native plant gardening. A good place to start when planning a native plant garden, Pocha said, is observing the plants that grow naturally in your area. Do the plants grow in shady or sunny areas? When do these flowers bloom? These are among the questions that Pocha encouraged the seasoned and budding gardeners to ask themselves. Finally, Caryn Miske, the Executive Director at CRC, gave a presentation on DIY pollinator houses and feeders. Many of the houses and feeders that are used by solitary bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds can be made with common household items. You can find many of these DIYs in the CRC pollinator garden.



In the midst of speaker presentations, some children held as still as they could to get their faces painted with butterflies, bats, and bees. Others kept busy painting colorful tiles which will be used to decorate the sides of the planter boxes. Some eager gardeners bought potted plants to take home, aiming to both provide additional habitat for pollinators and beautify their homes. Closing out the event, Pattie Crum's second grade class from Seeley Lake Elementary released Painted Lady butterflies into the garden. The butterflies, raised by the students in the classrooms, marked the end of the event but the beginning of a thriving pollinator garden for years to come.

In addition to future events and workshops, CRC plans to hold open hours for the public to visit and explore the pollinator garden. Stay tuned to CRC's website, email, and social media to be notified about open hours and events.

## Certify your Pollinator Garden

**Sign up to qualify your home garden as a certified pollinator habitat!**

This program entitles each gardener to:

- Consultation with CRC staff
- On-site certification

Gardens that meet the requirements will obtain:

- CRC pollinator garden certification sign
- Inclusion in the CRC pollinator garden database and map

Cost of program: \$35

Email [crc.watshd.coord@crcmt.org](mailto:crc.watshd.coord@crcmt.org) to request the requirements & an application.



# CLEARWATER NEWS

## MICROBIAL SOURCE TRACKING IN SEELEY LAKE

This year, CRC is working in collaboration with the Seeley Lake Sewer District to complete microbial source tracking in Seeley Lake. Also referred to as MST, microbial source tracking is a scientific method that can be used to identify the source of fecal bacteria in water.

To understand MST, we must take a step back and study *E. coli*. *E. coli* is a type of bacteria that is most commonly found in the intestines of warm blooded animals. It is also known as an “indicator bacteria” because its presence in water can indicate fecal contamination from warm blooded animals such as deer, geese, dogs, and/or humans. The amount of *E. coli* in a body of water is an important indicator of water quality. However, *E. coli* testing is somewhat limited because it cannot definitively determine the source of the fecal contamination (i.e. whether it originated from humans or deer).

This is where MST comes in. Through microbial source tracking, scientists are able to confirm the source of fecal contamination in a body of water by looking for DNA markers that are unique to a particular animal. Results from microbial source tracking show a clear and quantitative comparison of the potential fecal contamination sources.

The image below (figure 1) shows an overview of the MST process. In this hypothetical example; 45% of the fecal contamination is coming from humans, 16% from geese, 24% from deer, 7% from dogs, and 8% from all other sources.

As the Seeley Lake Sewer District continues its mission to “assist the community in determining the need and cost of a centralized sewer system,” we are looking forward to adding the MST results to the community discussion.

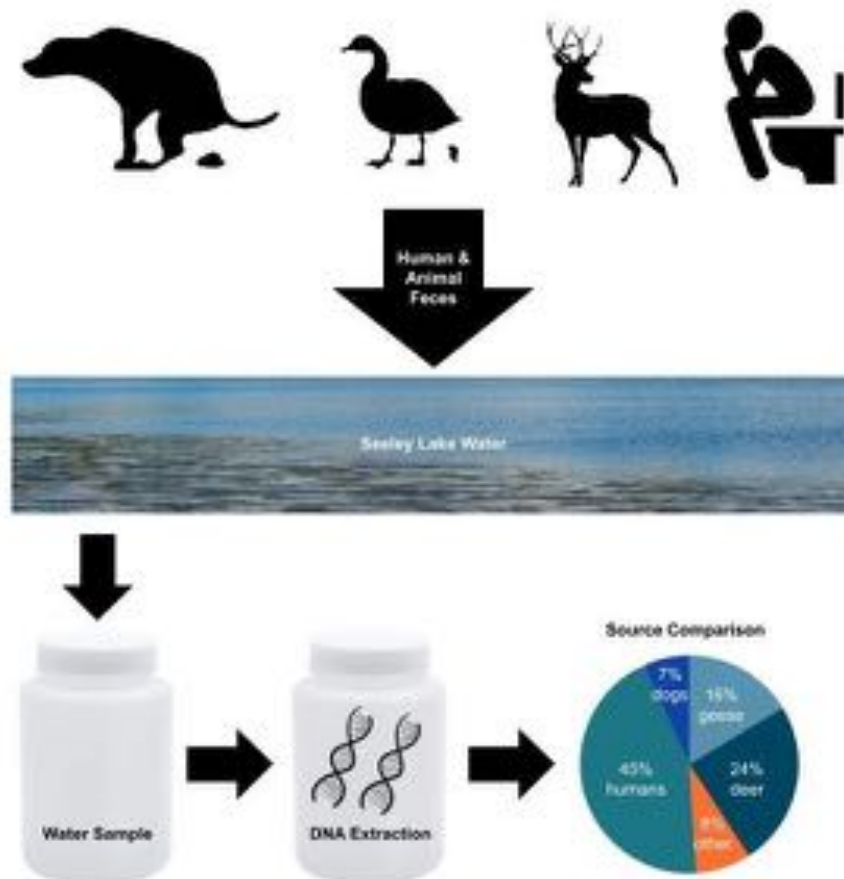


Figure 1



# CLEARWATER NEWS

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### GUIDED ETHNOBOTANY HIKE

**MEET OUR GUIDE:** Tim Ryan is a Salish tribal member, cultural educator, and Dept. Head for the Salish Kootenai College's Culture and Language Studies Department.

**THE TOPIC:** Rediscover local native plants in our backyard! Learn how Native Americans used this landscape and how plant life cycles gave clues for hunting & gathering and engaging with other tribal bands.

**WHEN:** June 22nd, 9am-3pm

**WHERE:** Meet at the CRC office in the Bison & Bear Shopping Center

*Hike will be capped at 20 participants. Please bring water & a lunch, dress for the weather, and leave dogs at home! Direct questions to Amanda at [crc.watshd.coord@crcmt.org](mailto:crc.watshd.coord@crcmt.org).*

**SIGN UP TODAY:** [crcmt.org/registration](https://www.crcmt.org/registration)

### INVASIVE LILY DIG

**SAVE THE DATE:** Saturday July 30th

Join CRC for a day of digging up pesty invasive water lilies along the Clearwater River Canoe Trail. More information to come soon. Stay tuned to the CRC website, email, and social media for more information.



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## VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

CRC is looking for volunteers who are passionate about our mission to "engage the community and facilitate efforts that will enhance, conserve, sustain, and protect the natural resources and rural lifestyle of the Clearwater Watershed for present and future generations."

### **1** POLLINATOR GARDEN CREW MEMBER

**Time Commitment:** 2 hours per week (through the end of August)

**Role Description:** CRC recently planted and opened a pollinator garden in downtown Seeley Lake! We need assistance keeping the garden maintained and thriving. This role entails general maintenance in the garden, special garden improvement projects, and welcoming the public into the garden during "open hours."

**Duties:** *Every shift*--water plants; closely monitor the health of the plants; fill fountain with water; restock pollinator feeders; host "open hours" during your shift for the public to explore the garden. *Occasional tasks*--conduct pollinator surveys; weeding; prep for garden events; attend CRC staff meetings when available.

### **2** VOLUNTEER PHOTOGRAPHER

**Time Commitment:** varies depending on availability and events

**Role Description:** CRC is looking for a photographer to help capture local nature scenes and organizational events. This photographer will help us tell the story of Seeley Lake and CRC. Sometimes the photographer will be asked to capture a specific scene in nature (eg. a photo of beavers to be used for a workshop). Other times the photographer will work collaboratively with CRC to identify images that will help bring publications to life. Occasionally, the photographer will be asked to attend a CRC event and take photos. Note-photo credit will always be given to the photographer if a photo is used in any publication.

**Duties:** Collaborate with CRC staff to identify beneficial photos; take photographs; catalog photos in CRC's database; attend CRC events (when available) to take photos; attend CRC staff meetings when available.

### **3** OFFICE ASSISTANT

**Time Commitment:** 1-3 hours per week

**Role Description:** CRC is looking for an office assistant to help with organizational and administrative tasks. Duties for this position will vary greatly from week to week. The office assistant will work closely with CRC's program assistant.

**Duties:** Tasks for this position will vary from week to week based on needs. Examples of tasks include: compiling and organizing articles; occasional assistance with mailings; file organization; website review; grants research; logistical support for events.



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## 4 VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

**Time Commitment:** 2-4 hours per week

**Role Description:** CRC is working to expand its volunteer program, specifically aiming to get more community members involved in our mission to "protect the natural resource and rural lifestyle of the Clearwater Watershed for future and present generations." We are looking for someone to help manage, coordinate, and grow the volunteer program. Do you have ideas on what motivates people in the community to volunteer? Do you have some experience with or excitement for organization and managing folks? Do you enjoy thinking big and implementing your ideas? If you said yes to any of those questions, you might be the perfect person for this role!

**Duties:** Duties include but are not limited to: overseeing volunteer duties and checking in with volunteers; directing volunteer questions to the appropriate CRC staff member; collaborating with CRC staff to build out the volunteer program structure (i.e. development of a handbook, volunteer surveys, etc.); brainstorming and implementing ways to attract and retain satisfied volunteers; managing the volunteer intake system; match volunteers' skills/interests to available positions; attending CRC staff meetings when available.

## 5 WATER SAMPLE TRANSPORTER

**Time Commitment:** 3 hours per date, 1 date per month (see specific dates in description)

**Role Description:** Every month, CRC completes E. coli and nutrient testing in Seeley Lake to help us understand the health of the lake. E. coli samples in particular are very time sensitive, and it is important to get the samples to the lab in a timely manner. The water sample transporter will help us ensure that these time sensitive samples reach the lab in time. Specifically, once a month, the transporter will coordinate the pickup of E. coli samples from CRC's aquatics techs. Then the transporter will drive the samples up to the Flathead Biological Station (a lab in Polson that is about 1.5 hours away from Seeley Lake). Note that the transporter does not need to be available for every date. Instead, you can volunteer for a specific date. Dates: Monday, June 20th; Monday, July 18th; Monday, August 15th; Tuesday, September 6th.

*Note-mileage will be covered/reimbursed by CRC.*

**Duties:** If interested, go on the boat with aquatics techs to aid in sample collection; coordinate sample pickup with aquatics techs; drive samples in an iced cooler to the Flathead Biological Station in Polson and confirm drop-off.

For more information on the volunteer positions (requirements, training/supervision, benefits) and to apply, go to [crcmt.org/volunteer](http://crcmt.org/volunteer) or contact Amanda at [crc.watshd.coord@crcmt.org](mailto:crc.watshd.coord@crcmt.org).

[crcmt.org](http://crcmt.org)

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