



Contact Us at 406-677-0069

NOVEMBER 2016

# Clearwater PARTNERS

## Events

### CRC Upcoming Events

#### Wildlife Tracking Workshop with Adam Lieberg

Sat., January 21, 10 am - The Hub in  
the Bison and Bear Mall

**Our Last Refuge**, a film about the  
struggle to end energy exploration  
in the Badger/Two Medicine Area  
- co-sponsored with Mt. Wilderness  
Association. Early March - Seeley Lake  
Community Hall

**Save Our Seeds Gardening Workshop**  
with Kalispell's Good Seeds Co.  
founder Robin Kelson. Co-sponsored  
with local gardening groups. Sat,  
April 1, Seeley Lake Community Hall

CRC's Celebrate the Clearwater Event  
presents **Remembering the Jocko Fire  
- A 10-Year Anniversary** Sunday, June  
24, 2017, Seeley Lake Community Hall

### Clear Vision

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.

To receive this quarterly newsletter, email  
[info@crcmt.org](mailto:info@crcmt.org) or call 406-677-0069.

## Water Suite

Although Clearwater Resource Council  
partners with many state and federal resource  
agencies who enable us to work here in the  
Seeley-Swan valley, our most valuable partner-  
ship is with "you": local residents, friends and  
neighbors, folks who live with our beautiful  
lakes and streams on a daily basis. "You", the  
volunteer Citizen Scientists, who make our  
programs possible, are our most valuable  
partners.

I'd like to brag a bit about what "you" have  
done on behalf of all of our lakes and streams  
over the last 9+ years.

**Adopt-A-Lake:** "You" have gone out on our  
6 most used lakes, in boats "you" provided,  
to measure water clarity and temperature,  
twice a month every summer since 2008.  
Additionally, "you" hiked into Rainy and  
Clearwater as well. That's over 1400 times! In  
2013, "You" started taking temperature and  
oxygen measurements from the water surface  
to the bottom at 3 locations in Seeley Lake, 6-8  
times in late summer. In 2015, another "you"  
started doing the same on Salmon Lake at 4  
spots.

**Aquatic Invasive Species:** Since 2010, "you"  
have maintained a PVC pipe off your docks to  
look for the development of invasive mussel  
colonies. Since 2011, "you" have collected  
concentrated water samples from over 30 sites  
on 6 lakes 4-5 times a year. Those samples were  
sent to the lab to test for the invasive mussels and  
an invasive plant, Eurasian Water Milfoil.

**Adopt-A-Stream:** In 2013, "you" collected  
nutrient samples 12 times from 11 streams,  
during run-off. Many of "you" had to  
snowmobile, ski, or snowshoe to the test sites.  
In 2016, "you" collected samples 15 times  
from over 20 streams.

Hats off to "you" - there is simply no money  
available to pay professionals to do what "you"  
have done. For sure, our hats are also off to  
our funding partners who provide money for  
supplies and testing and provide professional  
experience and guidance in planning and  
evaluating the results of "your" work.

So what have "you" accomplished?

**Adopt-A-Lake:** On a scale of good, moderate,  
and bad, "you" have established that a few of  
our lakes (Big Sky, Alva, and Clearwater) are  
in good shape. The rest are moderate and  
staying pretty steady. Keep in mind, this is 9  
years of looking at lakes that are thousands  
of years old and in many more thousands  
of years will become wetlands and then  
meadows, no longer lakes at all.

**Adopt-A-Lake** (the sequel): "You"  
demonstrated that in late summer, oxygen  
levels deep in the lake drop to near zero.  
Cold-water fish that need the colder water  
temperatures deep in the lakes don't have  
enough oxygen.

**Aquatic Invasive Species:** This is one of  
those situations where no news is good news.  
To date, all the samples "you" collected have  
tested negative for aquatic invasive species.  
The best chance for keeping "your" lakes  
free of invasive plants and animals is to  
aggressively work to keep them out and to  
find them quickly when they are introduced.  
The testing done on the samples "you" collect  
are state-of-the-art and even pushing new  
scientific standards. We must not let our  
guard down.

**Adopt-A-Stream:** The nutrient results from  
the samples "you" collected have provided  
insight into which streams are contributing  
the most nutrients to our lakes. Nutrients  
sound like a good thing, but too much of a  
good thing is bad for our lakes. Too many  
nutrients (think fertilizer) cause too much  
plant growth (think algae blooms) in our  
lakes. That plant growth contributes to the  
loss of oxygen we're observing.

If "you" would like to help with any of these  
programs, please email [joann@crcmt.org](mailto:joann@crcmt.org),  
or call Joann Wallenburn at (406) 210-8453.  
Reports of this work can be found on the  
Clearwater Resource Council's website:  
[www.crcmt.org](http://www.crcmt.org). Submitted by Joann  
Wallenburn

## Invasive Mussels Found in Montana

The Clearwater Resource Council received notice that the larval form of the invasive mussels commonly known as zebra or quagga mussels have been positively identified in water samples from the Tiber Reservoir, east of the divide. Water samples from Canyon Ferry are giving inconclusive results. Until this finding, Montana was one of only five mussel-free states west of the Mississippi; the other states being Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Wyoming.

The rapid response plan has been put in motion to assess the extent of the infestation and to determine the best course of action for eradication or containment. So far, no adult mussel colonies have been located, but the effort to search for them is young. At this point, there are far more questions than answers. We do not yet know the results of the water samples CRC volunteers have collected on our lakes. It's either a "no news is good news" situation where the testing is done and the results were negative or it's a "no news is no news" because the samples haven't been tested yet. Much as we would like to contact the lab to find out, I'm sure they are overwhelmed testing



samples from Tiber and Canyon Ferry and downstream waters.

The Clearwater Resource Council has had an active monitoring program for these

mussels since 2011. If you are willing to help monitor our lakes next year, we can always use more hands. Please contact Joann by email: [joann@crcmt.org](mailto:joann@crcmt.org) or by phone (406) 210-8453.

## Trail Lovers Wanted

The Seeley Lake Trails Project seeks trail enthusiasts to provide leadership for local trails planning. Over the next 12-18 months, we aim to develop a trails plan for the Clearwater Valley that has the support of all community user groups and large land managers and input from regional partners, out-of-town visitors and the interested public.

Our goal is to make our local trails the best for everybody who uses them, from hikers to horsemen, ATV users to mountain bikers, snowmobilers to skiers. We are working to improve local opportunities for outdoor recreation, boost Seeley Lake's tourist economy and connect Seeley Lake to neighboring communities.

We will launch the public input process in January 2017 and are looking for new Advisory Council members to help guide that process.

Everyone is welcome, however we would like more representation from backcountry horsemen, outfitters, hunters, fishermen, backcountry and yurt skiers, students lodging providers and residents of the Woodworth Road and Placid, Inez and Alva Lake areas.

**Interested? Questions? Contact Cathy Kahnle at [cathy@crcmt.org](mailto:cathy@crcmt.org) or 406-531-4152.**