



UC3 Aquatic Invasive Species Monitoring Contract Progress Report December 1, 2019

WLI and the Flathead Lake Biological Station hosted a second AIS lake monitoring training on Friday, October 4 at the Philipsburg Theatre near Georgetown Lake. Inclement weather precluded us from a hands on training out on the water. Presenters included Craig McClane (FWP), Phil Matson (FLBS), Cynthia Ingelfinger (WLI) and Allison Pardis (USFS) and covered key information related to water quality monitoring, aquatic invasive plant identification and management efforts, and training on how to use FWP's Survey123 data collection app. The key components of successful monitoring were also discussed including: plankton tow sampling techniques (horizontal, vertical hauls), sample site selection criteria, equipment needs, sample preservation, ancillary data collection, and equipment decontamination procedures.

Groups attending included MT Department of Environmental Quality, Bitterroot Trout Unlimited, Big Hole River Foundation, Georgetown Lake Association, Blackfoot Challenge, and University of Montana Western's Ecology and Fisheries class. Of this group, Blackfoot Challenge was very interested and took a kit for next season. The potential volunteer from Georgetown expressed interest but wanted a refresher training in the spring and didn't want to take a kit yet. Two other Georgetown residents are interested but couldn't make that training so we will follow up with the Georgetown group next spring.

To date, 4 kits have been distributed to:

- Dave Shively – University of Montana Geography Department and Clark Fork and Kootenai River Basins Council (1)
- Karen Wickersham – Thompson Chain of Lakes (2)
- Jennifer Schoonen – Blackfoot Challenge (1)

Larry Schock with DNRC was contacted about Painted Rocks in the Bitterroot. He then contacted Bitterroot Trout Unlimited, and Jeremy Anderson, the new Executive Director, attended the October 4th training. We are not sure if TU will sample Painted Rocks or if they can find a volunteer, but we feel this outreach will expand our reach.

John Crowley, the manager for the Bitterroot Irrigation District, was contacted about Lake Como. He didn't think sampling was a priority there since it is drained almost dry every year, and they conduct a shoreline ocular survey at that point.

We have made good progress on the website. The website domain name was purchased, hosting secured, and a logo was designed using an online company previously used to develop the Flathead Basin Commission's new logo. Content has been drafted, and eBiz Services is under contract to design and populate the site.

WLI has also partnered with the Flathead National Forest for increased eDNA monitoring on four lakes on National Forest lands in 2020. Samples will be collected in 2020 at Hungry Horse Reservoir (10), Tally Lake and Ashley Lake (3 each), and Upper Stillwater Lake (2). The samples will be analyzed for zebra mussel, quagga mussel, Eurasian watermilfoil and curlyleaf pondweed.

2020 outreach efforts will focus on identifying incubator groups around Lake Kookenusa, Noxon Reservoir, the Yaak Valley including Bull Lake, McGregor Lake, Georgetown Lake and the Bitterroot Valley. Depending on plankton net availability after contact with possible incubator groups, it could also focus on enabling existing lake groups on Ashley Lake, Echo Lake, Little Bitterroot Lake, Lindbergh Lake, and Lake Mary Ronan to conduct additional sampling.