



**UC3 Aquatic Invasive Species Monitoring Contract Progress Report
FINAL REPORT 2020
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Since the spring of 2019, The Upper Columbia Lakes Network has grown into a geographically comprehensive network of volunteers who are trained and equipped to monitor their local lakes for AIS. To kick off the UCLN program, WLI, FLBS, and FWP staff worked together to hold two volunteer trainings in 2019; and WLI staff conducted additional individual trainings (due to Covid restrictions) in 2020. Trainings covered identifying aquatic invasive plants, water quality monitoring and plankton tow sampling and decontamination techniques and protocols.

Materials for 15 AIS sampling kits were purchased and assembled and include:

- Action Packer travel tote
- 30 cm x 120 cm x 64-micron plankton net
- Microscopy Sampling bottles
- ETOH sample preservative
- Secchi disc and measuring tap
- Water temperature thermometer
- AIS identification guide
- Binder with collection & decontamination protocols, a DEQ Harmful Algae Bloom (HAB) flier, a NALMS Secchi dip-in flier and instructions, bottle labels, and FWP sample submission forms

So far, twelve new volunteers from eight partner groups have been trained and equipped with monitoring kits, and from July through September 2020, sixteen samples were collected from ten lakes. All samples were sent to FWP's lab in Helena and all sampling data was uploaded into FWP's AIS Survey 123 database.

Participating groups include:

- Avista (Noxon and Cabinet Reservoirs)
- Blackfoot Challenge (Lakes in the Clearwater drainage)
- Friends of Echo Lake (Echo Lake)
- Georgetown Lake Association (Georgetown Lake)
- Little Bitterroot Lake Association (Little Bitterroot Lake)
- Thompson Chain of Lakes (Middle Thompson and Crystal Lakes)
- United State Forest Service (McGregor Lake)
- Yaak Valley Forest Council (Alvord and Kilbrennan Lakes)

In the spring of 2020, a new website domain name was purchased, hosting secured, and a logo was designed. The new website (ucln.net) now provides volunteers and partners with AIS monitoring protocols, background information and resources.

Additional guidance and needed equipment will be provided by WLI program staff for continued sampling in 2021-2022. Many groups plan to expand to new lakes and increase their sampling frequency as well. This program has created an educated and engaged group of citizens and lake associations working to protect their lakes from AIS and participate in the statewide effort led by FWP to keep AIS out of lakes in the Upper Columbia Watershed of Montana. WLI appreciates the opportunity to lead this program.