

Western Montana Conservation Commission: Collaboration & Education for Water Resource Protection

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WESTERN MONTANA
**Conservation
Commission**

Who is WMCC?



WESTERN MONTANA
**Conservation
Commission**

UPPER COLUMBIA CONSERVATION COMMISSION



ESTABLISHED

July 1, 2023

MISSION

Water quality protection +
AIS mitigation & prevention

WHERE WE SERVE



Mission & Vision

Our purpose:

Our mission is to **protect and improve** the quality of western Montana's **aquatic resources**.

Our hope for the future:

Clean water is essential to maintain our way of life. Our vision is for western Montana to be a **leader** in **innovative** natural and aquatic resource **conservation**.

By fostering **participation** and **collaboration**, we envision **responsible stewardship** of aquatic resources to provide for **future generations**.



Pillars

The Work We Do



Aquatic Resource Protection

Goal: Support existing and create new programs and projects to have positive, on-the-ground impacts.

Foundations:

- Aquatic invasive species prevention
- Water quality protection through point and nonpoint source pollution reduction



Inclusive Education & Outreach

Goal: Inspire action for responsible water stewardship and provide resources for consistent messaging.

Foundations:

- Diverse, engaged partners
- Culturally appropriate messaging
- Outreach that inspires public participation & water stewardship



Collaboration & Facilitation

Goal: Convene partners to collectively identify and address resource challenges and opportunities.

Foundations:

- Sharing and creating knowledge with partners
- Support and enhance existing efforts



Voting Commission Members

Total = 34

Voting = 16

Governor-Appointed (9)

- Hydropower utility
- Electric cooperative
- Private landowner
- Private citizen at large
- Private industry
- Natural resource, conservation, or recreation organization
 - Upper Clark Fork & Blackfoot River Basin
 - Lower Clark Fork & Bitterroot River Basin
 - Kootenai River Basin
 - Flathead River Basin

Other Voting (7)

- 2 county commissioners
- 2 conservation district representatives
- 2 representatives of wastewater or stormwater utilities
- CSKT natural resource department

Advisory Commission Members

Total = 34

Nonvoting/Advisory = 18

Nonvoting State (12) & Federal (6)



Bonneville
POWER ADMINISTRATION



Committees

Aquatic Invasive Species

Strengthen the statewide **AIS prevention** & mitigation program in western Montana by identifying and **filling gaps** and **supporting local partners** in their existing efforts.

Onsite Wastewater Treatment

Develop a **shared strategy** through a **collaborative process** to protect public health and water quality related to the **management of onsite wastewater** treatment systems in western Montana.

Monitoring & Coordination

Fulfill WMCC's statutory duties to **monitor** the condition of **natural resources** in Western Montana and **support coordination** in a meaningful way.

Education, Outreach & Communications

Drives **communication strategies** and focuses on **collaborative outreach** and messaging to **support organizations** across Western Montana through the Montana Waters: Clearly Connected campaign.





MONTANA WATERS

Clearly Connected.

THE WHAT:

Expand public knowledge and awareness of water quality issues

Increase coordination with watershed partners by enhancing partnership opportunities

Inspire residents and visitors to take pride and responsibility in conservation efforts

Encourage individual and societal behavior change

Together, we can keep
our waters clean, clear,
and connected.



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THE WHY:

Water is life.

Every action makes a difference.

The time to act is now.



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WESTERN MONTANA Conservation Commission

THE HOW:

Voluntary collaboration of partners working to protect our waters.

Working across boundaries to unite organizations with unified messaging.

Sharing generously all resources, tools, and knowledge.

The power of the collective effort to make real change in our watershed.



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WATERS**
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THE WHO:

Partners in creating & sharing the campaign

- Federal agencies
- State agencies
- Tribal governments
- Local governments
- Non-profit organizations
- Local watershed organizations



Audiences of the campaign

- Recreational water users
- General water users
- The public
- Partner organizations
- Neighborhood & homeowner associations
- Legislators & policymakers



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STRATEGY

Six Elements of Conservation

Fairness &
Accuracy

Depth

Emphasis on
Skill Building

Action Oriented

Instructional
Soundness

Usability



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STRATEGY

Campaign Led

Montana Waters:
Clearly Connected

Keeping Montana Waters
clean, clear, and
connected, together

Be a Montana Waters
Steward & help keep our
waters clean, clear, and
connected

Emotionally Led

Together we can keep
our waters clean, one
small action at a time.

When our waters are
clean, our fish and
wildlife stay healthy - and
so do we.

Together we can keep
Montana Waters clean
and clear for generations
to come.

Rationally Led

Be septic smart.
Maintain your septic
system. Learn more at...

Clean water starts at the
curb, Adopt-a-Drain in
your local community...

Protect your local
waterbodies by installing a
rain garden on your
property. Learn more at...



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Campaign Led



Emotionally Led



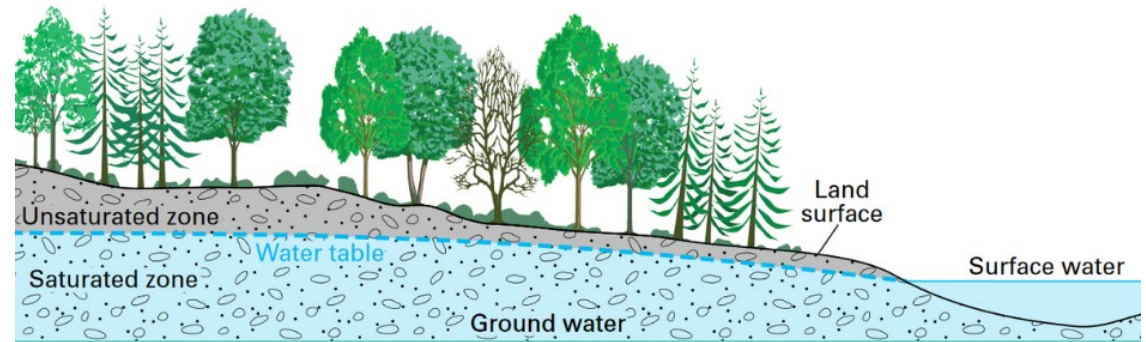
Rationally Led



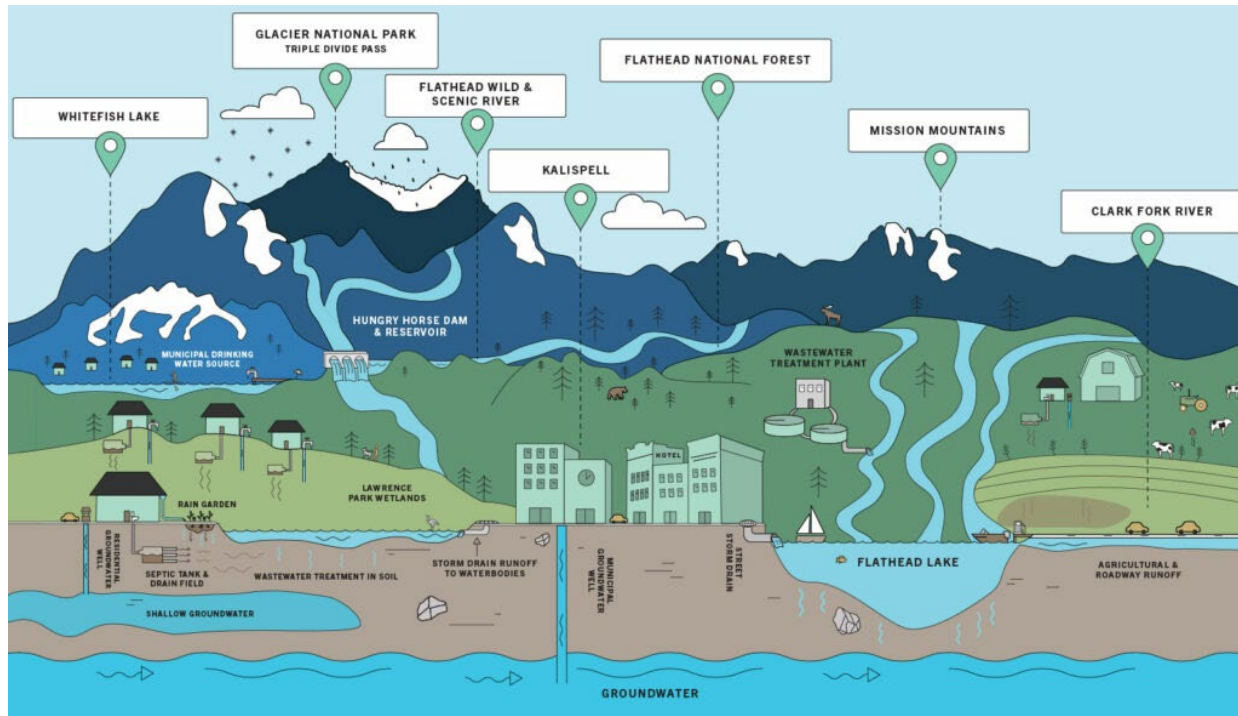
CO-BRANDING



What is groundwater?



PARTNER RESOURCES



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PARTNER RESOURCES

RETRACTABLE BANNER
36"W X 90"H

MONTANA WATERS
Clearly Connected.

GET TO KNOW YOUR WATERSHED

Montana Waters connect us all. Read on to learn more about how our waters, lands, wildlife, and people are all intricately connected.

- HEALTHY HEADWATERS** start with precipitation that falls from the sky. Snow, rain, and hail are the primary sources of water. Runoff from the sky can carry soil, pollutants, and other materials from the land into our rivers and streams.
- HEALTHY AND PROTECTED RIVERS**, like the Flathead Wild & Scenic River, provide critical habitat for native trout, aquatic insects, and more.
- DAMS AND RESERVOIRS** provide drinking water, water storage, flood control, and electrical power to the residents of northwest Montana and beyond.
- HEALTHY LAKES** provide a safe and enjoyable place for residents to recreate and enjoy the outdoors. They also provide critical habitat for many species of fish and wildlife.
- HEALTHY FORESTS** increase water runoff efficiency, reduce flooding risk, improve water quality, provide critical habitat for many species of fish and wildlife, and help regulate the climate.
- RESIDENTIAL AREAS** outside of city limits heavily consume water through showerheads and toilet flushes. Water conservation is important for protecting the health of our watersheds.
- HEALTHY STREAMS AND WETLANDS** provide food production for communities, critical habitat for fish and wildlife, filter pollutants, and improve water quality.
- URBAN AREAS** contribute to the health of our watershed with impervious surfaces like roads, parking lots, and roofs. As it rains, it can pick up pollutants such as lead, zinc, and copper. These pollutants can then be carried into our streams and rivers.
- AGRICULTURE** and the livelihoods of farmers and ranchers depend on accessible clean water for irrigation, crops, and livestock.
- HEALTHY GROUNDWATER** and soil are vital for a healthy watershed. As water infiltrates the ground, it recharges the groundwater. Groundwater discharges to the surface and supplies the streams and rivers. The discharge is a natural process that provides services like clean drinking water and treatment of septic leachate.

Learn more at MONTANAWATERS.COM

RETRACTABLE BANNER
36"W X 90"H

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BE A MONTANA WATERS STEWARD

We all live in a watershed, and every choice we make has an impact on our water. One action at a time, we have the power to preserve our pristine waters for generations to come.

- PROTECT WETLANDS AND BIRDBATH HABITAT WITH THESE WATERSHED-FRIENDLY GARDENING TIPS:** Apply fertilizers and pesticides sparingly. Avoid mowing in the early spring. Plant a diversity of deep-rooted native vegetation.
- INSTALL A RAIN GARDEN ON YOUR PROPERTY** to filter pollutants from stormwater runoff and prevent them from being deposited in the storm drain. To most areas, stormwater enters the storm drain and gets untreated directly into local watersheds.
- USE AND DISPOSE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS PROPERLY** and never dump chemicals into storm drains, creeks, or lakes.
- PROMPTLY CLEAN UP AND DISPOSE OF PET WASTE** to prevent bacteria and disease nutrients entering storm drains and eventually local watersheds.
- USE A COMMERCIAL CAR WASH TO WASH YOUR VEHICLES AND OTHER EQUIPMENT** where the wash water drains to the sanitary sewer and is treated.
- MAINTAIN YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM** with annual inspections and pumping or needed septic systems that are outdated, poorly designed, or otherwise compromised and posing groundwater and surface water.
- RECREATE RESPONSIBLY WITH THESE TIPS:** Follow Leave No Trace principles. Don't drink, swim, or fish your motorboat and gear to prevent the spread of invasive species. Reduce boat wakes to prevent increased shoreline erosion. Green up and get up by using absorbent fuel bins when refueling.
- KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR LOCAL WATERSHEDS AND REPORT ANY ISSUES** like illegal dumping, illegal log skidding, pollution, and more to your local water management agency.
- ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT** in your local community by building in cleared areas where the groundwater is not shallow and limiting the density of development, including paved areas, over the septic.
- GET INVOLVED WITH LOCAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES** like community source initiatives, river restoration projects, trash clean-ups, and more.
- SHARE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING YOUR LOCAL WATERSHED** with your family, friends, and community to help them become Montana Water Stewards too!

Learn more at MONTANAWATERS.COM

TABLETOP BANNER
36"W X 54"H

WE ALL LIVE IN A WATERSHED

Montana waters bond mountaintops to riverbeds, connect cities upstream with communities downstream, and provide the link between generations. Join us in keeping our waters clean, clear, and connected.

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MONTANAWATERS.COM

TABLETOP BANNER
24"W X 54"H

WE ALL LIVE IN A WATERSHED

When each of us always our part to protect water quality one action at a time, we have the collective power to protect and preserve our beautiful, pristine waters for generations to come.

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Learn more at MONTANAWATERS.COM

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CAMPAIGN BRAND BOOK & COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE



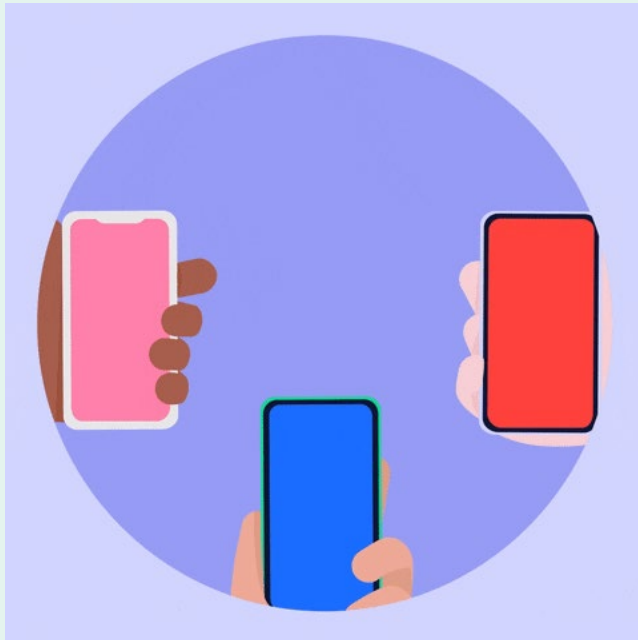
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MEASURING SUCCESS

Communications



Behavioral change



Montana Waters recruitment



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Questions?

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