

Lolo Watershed Group

News from up the Creek



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Dear fans and supporters of LWG,

First off, thank you for your interest in and support of a healthier Lolo Creek watershed. Since joining the team in early January, I've been so grateful for the welcome I've received from the community. From working with local businesses (shout out to [Lolo Creek Distillery](#) and [Lolo Peak Brewery!](#)) to meeting with landowners, to presenting at the [Community Council](#) meeting, I've really enjoyed getting to know you all.

One of the projects I've been working on is researching the feasibility of using beaver

mimicry in our watershed. If you follow us on [facebook](#), you have probably seen graphics and articles describing the concept. As we continue to see hotter, drier summers and earlier, wetter springs with smaller winter snowpacks, beaver mimicry has been shown to [increase natural groundwater storage](#) and provide for late summer recharge to streams. These techniques have been [used in other Western Montana drainages](#), and I am excited to see how we could potentially apply them here in Lolo. I love to [talk about beavers](#), so please drop me a line if you have any questions or are just curious about the creatures!

I look forward to the rest of the year with you all!

Best,

Lauren Herbine

2019 Big Sky Watershed Corps member

Watershed Group Happenings

Lolo Creek Distillery Profit Share

Thank you to all who joined us for a fun evening of friends, cocktails, and watershed protection!



Lolo School 6th Grade Watershed Experience

Sixty Lolo School 6th graders were given a four day watershed science experience taught by the [Clark Fork Watershed Education Program](#) (CFWEP) and the Lolo Watershed Group. The highlight of the experience included trips out into the field— one to Bobbie and Barry Bartlette's Dance Hall and one to a burnt section of Forest Service land. Thanks to donations by you and a grant from the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Montana, these 6th graders were able to learn about sediment, fire, turbidity, weeds, and more in our watershed!



Volunteer tree planting day

On April 27th we worked with local land owners, Patti and Gayland Enockson, to plant 324 trees on a few acres of their land that was scorched from a backburn during the 2017 Lolo fire. We had 17 wonderful people volunteer their afternoon. This initial restoration work will help improve the soil stability around Lolo Creek. We encourage other landowners impacted by fire to reach out if there are questions regarding restoration or funding assistance that might be available.



Bear Aware Event

Tom Morrare holding down the table at this year's Lolo Bear Aware event! Check out missoulabears.org for updates on bear activity in the area.



University of Montana Hydrology field trip

Members of the Spring '19 Hydrology lab took a trip up Highway 12. Highlights included a stop at Traveler's Rest, learning to pump wells, and discussing the snow pack at Lolo Pass.



Monitoring

From 2016-2018, Lolo Creek has been the focus of an [important water supply study](#), conducted in partnership between the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology (MBMG) and the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). In May of 2018,

data collection wrapped up and is currently being analyzed and used to create a model that will show how flows can be expected to change under a variety of influences. Certain elements including climate, water use, [geology](#), and groundwater recharge all play a part in Lolo Creek surface water flows. Using equipment put in place during this period, researchers and LWG are continuing to monitor groundwater levels and isotopic signatures in our precipitation. This research is critical for our community as we continue to try to understand the water capacity and behavior of Lolo Creek.



Field Guides!

The Montana Natural Heritage Program, run by the state library, has a wonderful [field guide resource](#). You can create your own field guides for almost any group of organisms (i.e. plants, conifers, mammals, birds, invasive weeds, etc.). These can then be printed, accessed online, or downloaded as a PDF onto your phone for offline use!

This month, I've put together a field guide on the vascular plants of the Lolo Creek watershed: click [here](#) for the PDF.

I'll pull together new ones each month- if you have any requests, drop me a line.

Amazon Smile

Consider setting up [Amazon Smile](#) to use your Amazon orders to to donate to Lolo Watershed Group.

From one member: "I chose our local group who are working to preserve our watershed through tree planting in burned areas, education and field trips, working with others to reduce sedimentation in to the creek, enhance trout habitat, understand ground water flow, and more."