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## **MONITORING MONTANA WATERS**

*Providing assistance with water monitoring efforts in Montana*

### **OVERVIEW**

Monitoring Montana Waters (MMW) is a Flathead Lake Biological Station (FLBS) program established to enhance and support water quality monitoring in Montana. MMW provides scientific, technical and financial support to citizen-led watershed groups conducting monitoring, to help and ensure the use of scientifically-sound and credible methodologies in all aspects of their monitoring efforts.

MMW offers assistance with:

- Designing monitoring plans
  - Goals and objectives of monitoring efforts must first be identified and articulated
  - We can assist with study design, identification of data and data gaps, selecting analytes, and other components needed to complete a Sampling Analysis Plan
- Sampling Analysis Plan (SAP) and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
  - A written SAP and SOP are the first steps in defensible monitoring. A SAP describes data collection efforts (what, where, when, why), while a SOP details the methods (how).
  - Groups with approved SAPs are eligible to apply for MMW funding and on the ground training (SAP drafts are due November 1<sup>st</sup> to be eligible to apply for funding the following spring)
- Laboratory Analyses Funding
  - Approved SAP and SOP must be on file with MMW by January 1<sup>st</sup> to apply
  - Groups can apply annually (by February 1<sup>st</sup>) for funding to support analyses in FLBS's Freshwater Research Lab (FRL) \*metals samples will be subcontracted
  - Groups must provide 50% match, which can be personnel time, travel or dollars
  - A maximum of \$6000 may be awarded per year per group for analysis costs
  - Groups will be notified of their funding application status by March 1st
  - All data must be shared with FLBS and uploaded to MT DEQ's EquIS database
- Gear Funding
  - Groups can apply for funds once every 3 years to assist with the purchase of sampling gear (e.g. digital meters, tape measures, etc)
  - Groups must provide 100% matching funds (dollars)
  - A maximum of \$1500 may be awarded per year per group for equipment
  - Requirements and deadlines are the same as for laboratory analyses funding
- On The Ground Training in Methodologies
  - Prior to training, groups must have an approved SAP and SOP
- Data Analysis Assistance
  - We provide guidance on data analysis and interpretation
- Eligibility
  - Groups must monitor freshwater in Montana, complete a SAP and SOP, and sign a MOU with FLBS's MMW program