**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

o Goals and objectives of monitoring efforts must first be identified and articulated

o 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)

o 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 specific methods (how).

o Groups with approved SAPs are eligible to apply for MMW funding and on the ground training (SAP drafts are recommended by February 1st to be eligible to apply for funding)

• Laboratory Analyses Funding – Completed drafts of both the SAP and SOP must be on file with MMW by March 1st to apply

o Groups can apply annually (by March 1st) for funding to support analyses in FLBS’s Freshwater Research Lab (FRL) \*metals samples will be subcontracted

o Groups must provide 50% match, which can be personnel time, travel or dollars

o A maximum of $7000 may be awarded per year per group for analysis costs

o Groups will be notified of their funding application status by ~ April 1st

o All data must be shared with FLBS and uploaded to MT DEQ’s Equis database

• Gear Funding

o Groups can apply for funds once every 3 years to assist with the purchase of sampling gear (e.g. digital meters, tape measures, etc)

o Groups must provide 100% matching funds (dollars)

o A maximum of $1500 may be awarded per year per group for equipment

o Requirements and deadlines are the same as for laboratory analyses funding

• On The Ground Training in Methodologies

o Prior to training, groups must have an approved SAP and SOP

• Data Analysis Assistance

o We provide guidance on data analysis and interpretation

• Eligibility

o Groups must monitor freshwater in Montana, complete a SAP and a SOP, and sign a MOU with FLBS’s MMW program