

H2O-Know

August 2013, V5 Issue 2– Summer

The Newsletter of the Grand County Water Information Network

From the Director – Jane Tollett



Summer is a great time to catch bugs – or benthic macro invertebrates to be more exact! We have had several educational events out at Trail River Ranch, formerly the Betty Dick property, in the Rocky Mountain National Park. This beautiful land is at the confluence of the Bowen and Baker streams with the Colorado River, and is managed by Bonnie Severson who not only is preserving but improving this site. Additionally we are busy preparing for our fall programs which will include: Monarch Lake Day, East Grand and West Grand Middle Schools Watershed Weeks,

the 10th-grade Bug Week at Middle Park High School, and the Water Festival. By the end of October we will have been in contact with about 700 students from around the County. We are still securing monies for transportation costs, which are about all we need each year (besides the hundreds of volunteer hours) to make these events happen. What kind of an impact are we having? This year we had several students interested in water monitoring, and we believe more students are graduating from High School with interests in Science as well as other STEM (Science-Technology-Engineering-Math) subjects. One student is planning to major in Environmental Science. We know we are making a difference – one bug and one student at a time!

Database Update

Current database activity:

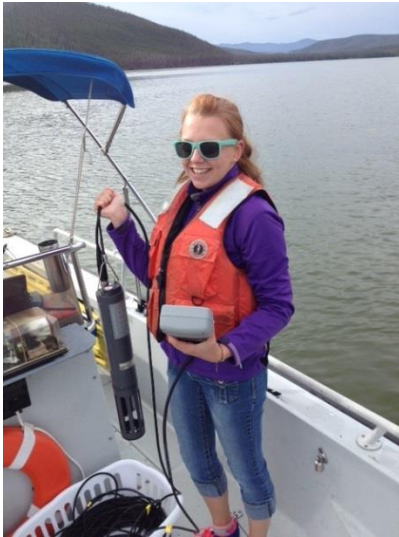
- All stream temperature data has been downloaded and checked, from 2004 to current. This will guarantee that what you download will be what we think was uploaded. It's a quality check – of over five million lines of data.
- A solution is about to be rolled out for an issue with data involving lab numbers. Why are we working on this? Our agreement to develop the database with Blue Otter Software (Randy Carver) involved GCWIN helping with trouble-shooting. Jane does a lot of work looking for issues and putting boundaries around the problems. As our data spans many different formats, we are helping Randy develop a better product that we hope other non-profits like ourselves can use in the future.
- All stream temperature data is up-to-date; Secchi data is available by spreadsheet.
- Work continues on additional programming as well as on the “punch” list of minor fixes.
- Go to www.wilbur.gcwin.org for database access.

Monitoring



The weather has been a bit more cooperative this summer than last. All programs are underway: Stream Temperature, Secchi, Cyanotoxin, Temperature and Conductivity. NADP (National Atmospheric Deposition Program) continues year-round. Thanks to our Secchi volunteers: Pat and John Raney, Brian Heckman and Steve Batty, Nick and Karen Skifaledes (shown left), Bradley Hilton, and Susie and Mike Mitchell.

Volunteers



We have three East Grand high school students helping us with Secchi monitoring this summer: Kyle Classen-Sophomore, Kelsey Fagan-Junior(shown left), and Alex Zolnir-Junior.

Kyle is the son of Gill Classen who is our bookkeeper and grant-writer. He is interested in computers and video games and attended Tech Camp at Colorado State University this summer.

Kelsey enjoyed Honors Biology last year and is looking forward to learning more about a career in some kind of environmental field. Alex also rides horses and has become interested in environmental careers after participating in our Bug Week program last year.

All students get Community Service hours for helping us and are welcome back next year. Thank-you students!

OSM/VISTA: What did they do? Where are they now?

What the VISTA program did for GCWIN:

With Celine Graas leaving July 19, our 3-year Americorps*VISTA grant has come to an end. This was a terrifically beneficial grant for GCWIN as well as providing good work experience for our VISTA's .

Benefits to GCWIN included:

- Formation of a county-wide education program, for 4th, 6th-8th, and 10th grade students covering key science and watershed science concepts via classroom and field trips. Now in our 4th year, we believe we are seeing more students graduate from High School and look at careers in science. One

of our summer projects is to review past graduation fliers from the Sky-Hi News and determine if we can quantify this.

- A new Website and e-mail system. This has greatly improved our communications internally and externally. The Website has been a great partner to the database. Find us at: www.gcwin.org
- GCWIN Geocaching! Although just started up months ago, we are getting very, very positive comments on this initiative which was intended to stretch our education program from students to families and adults. If you would like more information, please go to www.geocaching.com. All of our geocaches are listed as "GCWIN-WaterEducation". The Fraser River and Granby-Kremmling sites are listed there. All of our caches in the Three Lakes area will soon be listed separately on the GCWIN website.

Where are our VISTAs now?

Alex Brooks: After GCWIN, Alex worked for the WHWT (Western Hardrock Watershed Team) as the VISTA supervisor. He is currently working in Durango as the Programs Coordinator at the Fort Lewis College Environmental Center which focuses on environmental news communication, zero waste, campus sustainability, and local food programs.

Ben Carver: Ben is starting graduate school this fall at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. With a scholarship for 40% of his tuition, Ben will be studying International Development and Social Change in their Graduate Department of International Development, Community & Environment (IDCE).

Celine Graas: Celine is heading to Graduate School at the Colorado School of Mines, where she also did her undergraduate work. She is enrolled in MIPER - Mines International Political Economy of Resources. This is a unique degree and offers engineers, physical scientists, and social scientists skills in quantitative and qualitative analysis, and specialized knowledge on issues related to the global political economy, natural resources, and energy policy.

Grants and other Funding

- 1) GCWIN will be the recipient of funds generated by the InfiniteWest "Spirit of the Lake" Regatta, here in Grand Lake on August 17. These funds will go towards providing transportation for our fall education events. As part of the event, Jane will be leading an educational boat tour at 12-noon on the lake. The boat will be donated by Boater's Choice Marina, and the beer for the tour has been donated by the Tap House. For more details or to register for events or the boat tour go to www.spiritlakeregatta.com
- 2) BIG THANKS to Geoff Elliott and the Grand Lake Rotary – they are donating \$500 to our fall 2013 Education Program.

Water Facts – think about it

If you drink your daily recommended 8 glasses of water per day from the tap, it will cost you about 50 cents per year. If you choose to drink it from water bottles, it can cost you up to \$1,400 dollars. Plus, you will avoid sending 730 water bottles to the landfill.