

H2O-Know

June 2013, V5 Issue 1 – Late Spring

The Newsletter of the Grand County Water Information Network

From the Director – Jane Tollett



As usual we are glad for the late snows. This is a shot of our National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP) collector less than a month ago. 2012 was a good year for GCWIN, what with starting up this new monitoring program, welcoming our last VISTA Celine Graas, and making good progress with the database. We have finished another uneventful financial audit – no findings, just the kind we want! The only disappointment this year is the cancellation of our EPA Healthy Headwaters sampling program due to a combination of the sequestration and EPA budget cuts. However, we have three good years

of data, and hope to get our Benthic Macro invertebrate program funded by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) this fall so we can continue that program for its fourth year.

Database Update

The database progress was reviewed at the February 6 Board meeting.

Key accomplishments include:

- Over 20 years of Climax Molybdenum data inputted
- Denver Water data since 2006 formatted and inputted
- All stream temperature data from 2012 has been formatted and inputted, as well as 2012 Secchi

Database work planned for this summer includes:

- Programming WQX (Water Quality Exchange) upload ability for future grants flexibility
- Possibly being able to upload data to CUAHSI (Consortium of Universities for the Advancement of Hydrologic Science – our database is built on their Observational Data Model, or ODM). We will have to see if this is right for GCWIN.
- Again, meet with members for training. Please contact Jane if you would like it sooner than later.
- Keep working on the punch list!

Monitoring

Great news is that Sarah Hershfelt is returning as our Field Technician for 2013. Program updates:

Secchi Monitoring: First date out on the lakes will be June 6. Thanks Forest Service!

Stream Temperature: Sensors calibration checked, all were installed in May. We are using wires this year to connect sensors to anchors.

Temperature and Conductivity: All sensors installed, first field checks already completed.

Cyanotoxin: First sampling date will be July 15.

Education



On April 25 I was invited to present to Kremmling Elementary 5th grade class during their field trip to the old Kremmling landfill. Paula Belcher of the BLM also led a presentation on how landfills “gobble” up land and impact resources. To tie this in to water, we built a mini-landfill in a box complete with leachate. And, it was smelly, nasty leachate at that! (All the leachate was collected and brought home to my septic system). We filled the box with garbage, wasted apple juice, kitty litter, vegetable cuttings, old Jell-O, and lots of other items that often get thrown away. A watering can made a fine raincloud, and we collected the

leachate and measured it for pH and specific conductivity. After comparing it to the original “rainwater” the students learned the following:

- The water quality changed! The pH dropped, it really smelled, and there was a big color change.
- This was NOT water they wanted to drink, swim in, or have fish live in.
- A good leachate collection system keeps this out of rivers and aquifers.
- There are a lot of things you can recycle to keep them out of the landfill.

Thanks to Leslie Crosby, the Kremmling 5th grade teacher, who gave us this opportunity to teach.

OSM/VISTA Stories From the Field – Celine Graas

Over the course of this quarter I have been constructing a Geocaching GeoTour in which 27 separate Geocaches will be placed around Grand County in efforts to help spread water education to both locals and visitors. As part of these initial steps, the Bureau of Land Management invited me to give a Geocaching 101 presentation to the West Grand High School. I enthusiastically agreed, and on February 21st we made our way to the school.

After checking in with the main office, we proceeded to the classroom. As we were walking past the school’s main auditorium I saw a glimpse of the words “NCCC” on a projected screen. I immediately made the connection that NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) is a sister branch to my VISTA program under the AmeriCorps organization. I entered the auditorium and introduced myself to the two NCCC representatives, Meg and Andrew. As we began talking about our backgrounds, I learned that these were two of a group of eight NCCC members stationed at the National Sports Center for the Disabled in Winter Park, just a few minutes down the road! Meg and Andrew then invited me to present alongside them, which I gladly accepted, and thus commenced our explanation of AmeriCorps and its various branches and functions to a large group (approximately 60) of high school juniors and seniors.

During the presentation Meg and Andrew mentioned to the group that they were hosting a community service trash cleanup day/ get-to know your local AmeriCorps which just so happened to fall during

AmeriCorps week. I jumped at this opportunity realizing that this would be an excellent opportunity to engage high school students needing community service while also sharing the importance of AmeriCorps alongside other fellow AmeriCorps members. The clean-up day, which took place on March 15th, was a big success. Our group of 8 NCCC/VISTA and 6 high school students picked up over 6-40gallon bags of trash and fecal waste alongside the Fraser River Trail in Fraser, Co.

Although I did not give a Geocaching presentation that day due to a timely cancelation from lack of attendance, I did return the following day with the Bureau of Land Management and presented to a great group of students, all of whom learned a lot about Geocaching and even created their own Geocaching profiles! Overall, these two days were very beneficial in initiating new friendships as well as sharing knowledge about the service AmeriCorps members do within our communities.

Grants

BIG THANKS to Gill Classen, our Administrative Support for getting us the Captain Planet Grant - \$500 for Bug Week.

Water Facts – another reason to conserve

More people on this planet have a mobile phone than have access to a toilet.