



Clark Fork Watershed
Education Program

2023

Annual Report



View Online

OUR MISSION: To expand environmental literacy and stewardship through field-based science and research experiences.

OUR VISION: We exist because the planet needs sustainable communities who value resilient ecosystems.

OUR VALUES:



Stewardship

We exist to ensure sustainable futures.



Trust

We communicate factual information that the public can trust.



Science

We encourage curiosity in ourselves and others through scientific inquiry.



Education

We promote scientific literacy through place-based experiential learning.



Inclusion

We strive to provide accessible science for all.



A Letter from the Director

This past year has been an exciting one for the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CFWEP). Our strategic goals and planning have brought us into new watersheds, leading us to build new partnerships and extend our reach throughout Montana. In 2023, the Natural Resource Damage Program Councils voted to add an additional \$1m in funding to our education account. This additional funding ensured that CFWEP programming will continue into 2026 and came with the expectation that CFWEP will continue our diversification strategies. We are committed to careful planning to stretch our NRD dollars beyond 2026. We have focused on diversifying our portfolio, and have successfully met or exceeded our short-term goals in 2023. In addition, we successfully hosted the most profitable online auction in our history.

As we diversify, we've reached across the Continental Divide into the Yellowstone Watershed. We have created the EcosySTEM project, a long-term teacher professional development project. The ultimate goal of the EcosySTEM project is to create learning modules for teachers that encompass robust science teaching practices and authentic, citizen science research projects focused on data science within their own watersheds. The vision for this project is to engage students in learning science while contributing to their communities through scientific enterprise. Among the many partners who have been inspired to join this project are Montana Technological University, MT Fish Wildlife and Parks, the National Park Service, Dr. Shane Doyle (Crow Agency), US Forest Service, Yellowstone Safe Passages, Rural Resilience, Montana Resources, University of Montana Bird Ecology Lab, Butte Local Development Corporation, and Livingston and Butte Public Schools. We are currently seeking grant funds and private donations to begin curriculum writing and pilot testing within Butte and Livingston schools.

A second and important strategic goal begun in 2023 was pursuing a name change and designation as a Research Center within the Montana University System. This status change will enable CFWEP to gain more diverse funding resources and enable us to attract and retain science and education faculty members as part of our team. Stay tuned for the name change coming soon!

Core to our mission is the story of the Clark Fork Watershed. The CFWEP program will continue as originally designed under the new Center umbrella. We will utilize this successful model to inspire hope and action within all of our projects and future development, ensuring that we continue our legacy of environmental stewardship. Thank you to all of those who have supported our endeavors from the beginning and thank you to those who are now joining our efforts! We look forward to an incredible year in 2024.

Kind Regards,

Rayelynn Brandt

Executive Director

Achievements

Added 269
New Individual
Donors
&
10 New Business
Donors

Increased
Auction Revenue
by 73%
From Prior Year

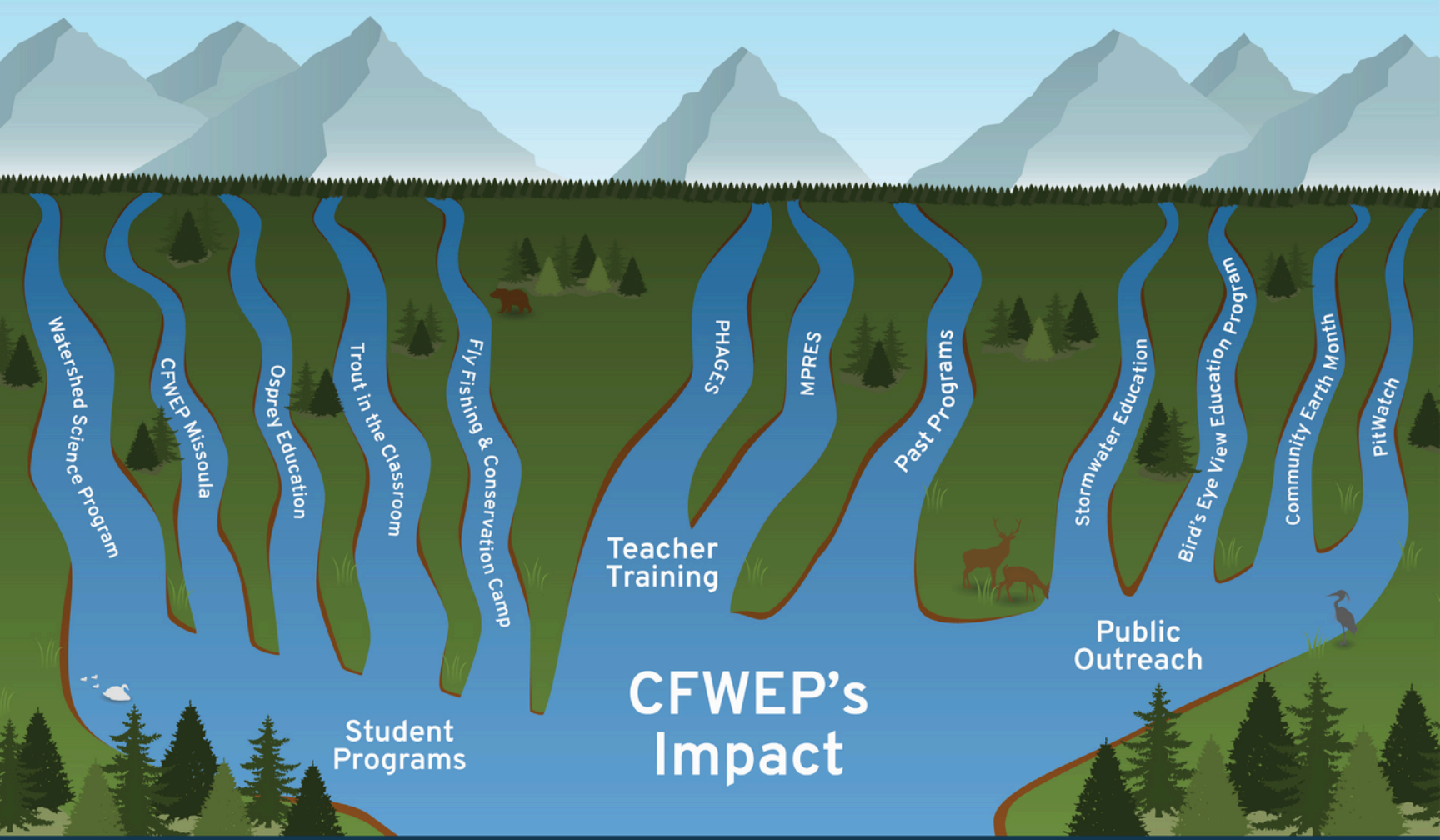
Decreased
Auction Expenses
by 95%
From Prior Year

Increased
Net Revenue
by 26%
From Prior Year

Added 40
New In-Kind
Donors - Donating
over \$18,000

Submitted \$2.2m
grant to the
National Science
Foundation.





Our programs reach students, teachers, and community members. Each program acts as a tributary, joining together to create a wider impact.

2023 by the numbers



Watershed
Science Program

1,184

Students Taught
in

36

Clark Fork
Classrooms



Trout in the Classroom

220

Students Taught in

13

Rural Classrooms



Osprey Education

514

People Engaged



Watershed Science
Education Interns

7

University of Montana
Students



Fly Fishing &
Conservation Camp

23

Campers

A circular inset image showing a person painting a large mural of various animals and plants on a wall at an outdoor festival.

Mainstreet Uptown
Butte Folk Festival

24 Different
Groups Represented

40+ Volunteers

1000+ Visitors

A circular inset image of a group of students and community members wearing yellow safety vests and posing for a group photo outdoors.

Earth Month &
CUBS Week

901

Students & Community
Members Involved

A circular inset image of a classroom setting where a teacher is interacting with students, one of whom is using a microscope.

PHAGES

18

Teachers Trained &

1,113

Students Reached

A circular inset image showing a person's hand holding a small bird, with another person's hand visible in the background.

Bird's-Eye View
Education Program:

352

Community Members
Engaged

Learn more about our
programs at cfwep.org



2023 Volunteers

Volunteers are essential to helping our programs run smoothly and effectively. Thank you to everyone who has given their time to CFWEF this year:

Taleigh Adrian • Monica Berremen • Jordan Bird • Vanna Boccadori • Judy Boyle • Debra Crow • Rich Day • Scott Desean • Jenna Dohman • Chris Doyle • Sara Edinberg • Colleen Elliott • Elizabeth Erickson • Kelsie Field • Lillian Gordon • Geffen Guscio • Ann Hanson • Megan Heath • Maria Hyvonen • Shari Kelley • Gauge Kruzich • Morgan Maccione • Kathryn Manz • Pedro Marques • Kate Mattern • John McKee • Mitchell Mihailovich • Tom Mocilac • Tana Nulph • Chad Okrusch • Olivia Pasco • Ella Prigge • Brent Ruby • Jessie Salix • Morgan Schultz • Oren Schwartz • Marcus Shutey • Haley Sir • Kim Snodgrass • Fletcher Stone • Shelby Weigand • Emmy Zemke

2023 Teacher Awards

CFWEF works with some of the leading teachers in the state. Several of our teachers have been recognized for their outstanding work this year, including:

Linda Rost - Received the National Education Association Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence; the Teresa Veltkamp Advocacy Award for Excellence in Indian Education; National Association of Biology Teachers Outstanding Biology Teacher for Montana Award; PhD in Curriculum and Instruction with specialization in STEM.

Sarah Urban & Megan Lane- Finalists for Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching



STRATEGIC GOALS

Looking to the future, CFWEP is preparing for more growth. We took time this year to set strategic goals for 2024 to 2026. These goals will guide our efforts as we bring in new projects and expand existing programs.



**Secure
sustainable
& diverse
funding.**



**Attract,
train, &
retain top
talent.**

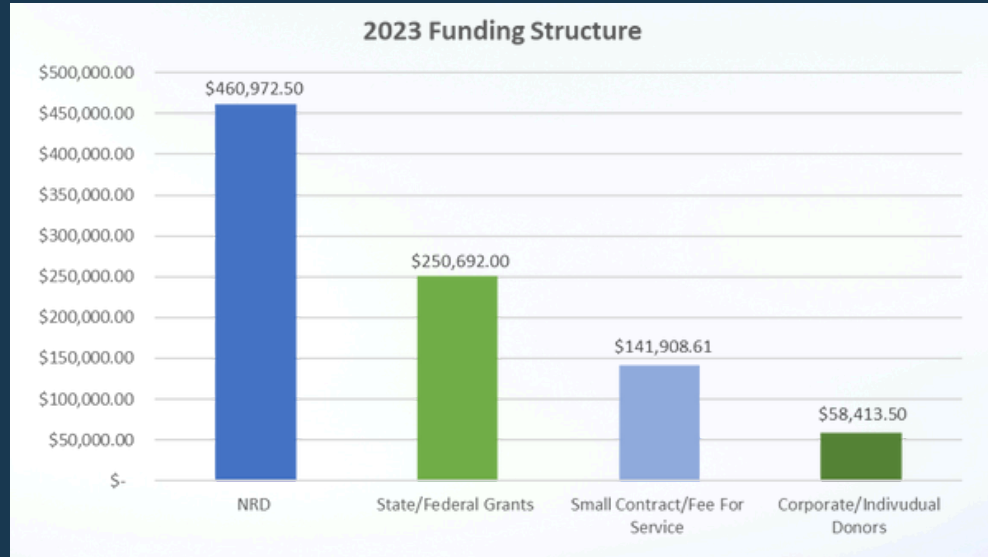


**Implement
excellent
programming
through
partnerships
of reciprocity.**



**Increase
visibility as an
environmental
education
resource.**

Funding Structure



The CFWEP funding transition plan rolled out in 2022. Our goal is to balance funding sources of four areas: 25% from NRD, 25% from state and federal grants; 25% from small contracts and fee for service programming; and 25% from corporate and individual sponsors. Since the inception of this plan in 2022, we have made significant strides in these areas. We have decreased overall spending from NRD, and we have increased small contract and fee-for-service programming to \$141,908, or approximately 56% of the \$250,000 target. In the corporate and individual sponsorship area, we have increased from \$51,327 dollars in 2022 to \$58,413, or approximately 23% of the \$250,000 target.

In 2024, our efforts for private donations, corporate and business sponsorship will continue. We need people who believe in scientific literacy, sustainable communities, and a resilient future to financially support CFWEP's work. If this sounds like you, please get involved at cfwep.org/support.

2023 Donors

Our work is possible because of the generosity of our donors. We are grateful to everyone who financially contributed to CFWEF this year.

Cash Donors

\$1000+ Rayelynn Brandl, Clearwater Credit Union, Joe Griffin & Sherry Vogel, George Grant Trout Unlimited, Michelle Hall, James Holodnick, Bill & Sidni Markovich, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Water & Environmental Technologies

\$500 - \$999 Chris Gammons & Colleen Elliott, Les & Stephanie Cook, Lacie Dahnke, Karl Haslbauer, Nicki Miller Houston, Carrie Keane

\$250 - \$499 5518 Design, Archibald Company, Daniel Bertram, Chris Brandl, Ronda Coguill, Pdraig Cunneen, Gallatin High School/Amy Washtak, GEO Steele's Co. Inc., Tammy Gordon, Dalit Guscio, Ingraham Environmental Inc., Kayla Lappin, Walt McIntosh, John McKee, Ella Monroe Duffy, Justin Ringsak, Donna Rowling

\$100 - \$249 Brad & Francene Archibald, Tim & Carleen Cassidy, Eyvanna Connole, Lori Cravatis, Chris Doyle, Katy Ellison, Rachel Grimsby, Casey Hackathorn, Julie Hamilton, Lindy Hanson, Nestor Hill, Jennifer Hislop, Katie Huckeby, David Hutchins, Gary Icopini, Jim Kaatz, Chad Klanecky, Ted Kronenbush, Dennis & Johanna Lester, Rich Long, John & Leah McCarthy Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund, Linda Moore, Pat & Jan Munday, Doug & Patti Neal, Oly Petersen, Bryan Robertson, Sara Rouse, Elaine Schnell, Megan Schuknecht, Tyler Shaffer, Silver Bow Kiwanis, Mary Sutherland, Jacqueline Timmer, Cathy Tutty, Sarah Urban, Amy Verlanic, Josh Vincent, Heather Walund

2023 Funders

**DENNIS & PHYLLIS
WASHINGTON
FOUNDATION**



RMEF



In-Kind Donors

\$1000+ APOC World, Tom Mocilac, Sweetgrass Rods, Washoe Park Trout Hatchery

\$500 - \$999 Rayelynn Brandl, James Holodnick, Montana Tech Foundation, Athletics & Campus Store, Pizza Ranch, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

\$250 - \$499 Blackfoot River Outpost, Fairmont Hot Springs, Megan Fylling UM Bird Ecology, Montana Learning Center, Old Works Golf Course, Orphan Girl Children's Theater, Quarry Brewing, Riley's Meats, Mike Robinson, The StoneFly Fly Shop

\$100 - \$249 ACE Hardware Anaconda, ACE Hardware Butte, Bedrock Sandals, Vern & Gayle Bleken, Claire Emery Art, Jeff & Jerri Doyle, Dr. Slick, Fierce Beauty, Garnet Mountain Pottery, Gem Mountain, La Sirena Mexican Food, Kayla Lappin, Montana Natural History Center, Montana Therapeutic Massage, onX Maps, Oro Fino Coffee, Philipsburg Brewery, Pintler's Portal Hostel, REI-Missoula, Tracy Royse, Dave Schatzka, Monica Schwemin, Science Mine, Bonnie Staley-Cook, Dean Stringer, Taco Del Sol/Pita Pit, Woods' Rose Wellness Center, Xplorer Maps

Executive Leadership Team

This year CFWEF launched our Executive Leadership Team, a volunteer committee of community leaders dedicated to helping us expand our funding sources.

Dr. Steve Gammon - Montana Tech

Brad Archibald - *Pioneer Technical Services*

Maggie Davis-Welch - *Butte Broadcasting, Inc.*

Rick Edwards - *NorthWestern Energy*

Elizabeth Erickson - *Water and Environmental Technologies*

Jeremy Fleege - *Montana Resources*

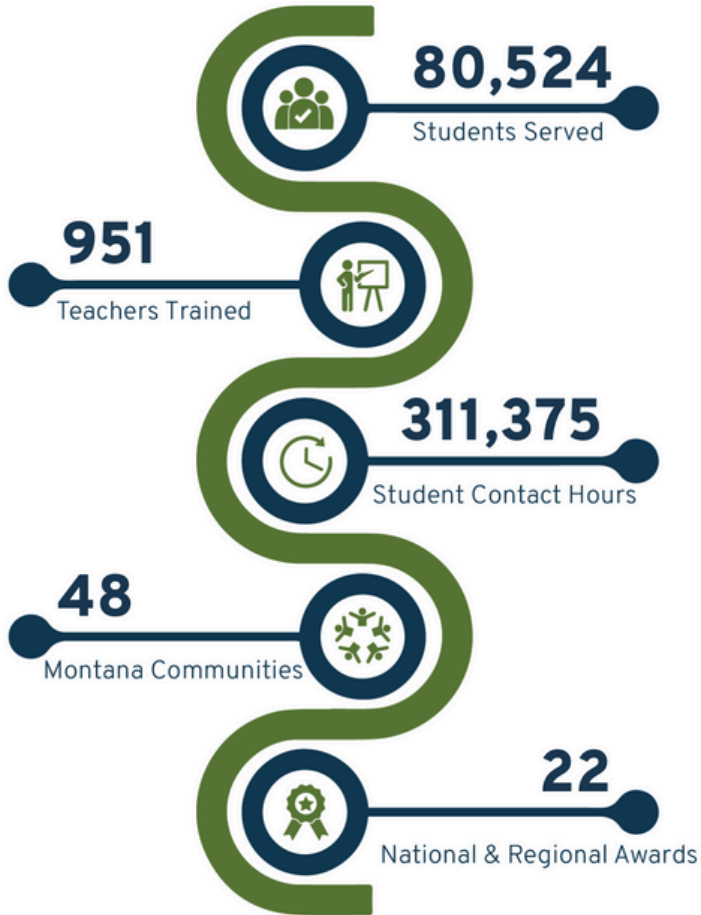
Erick Greene - *Montana Osprey Project*

Sidni Markovich - Markovich Inc.

Matt Vincent - *Rampart Solutions*

TOTAL SERVED SINCE 2005

For all CFWEP Direct Programming



Updated Through November 2023



Clark Fork Watershed Education Program

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CFWEP's work is made possible by...



SEPA SCIENCE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP AWARD
SUPPORTED BY THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

MONTANATECH



Learn more about CFWEP at cfwep.org