



# Your Home Watershed

## Update

A semi-annual newsletter for Gallatin Watershed residents

Promoting conservation and enhancement of our water resources while supporting the traditions of community, agriculture and recreation.

### Fall 2009

#### In this Issue

Letter from the GGWC Chair ... page 2

Holiday Art Competition Winners ... page 3

Gallatin Conservation District News ... page 3

Kid's Korner ... page 4

Gallatin Stream Teams 2009... page 4

#### Quotable Quotes

"Water links us to our neighbor in a way more profound and complex than any other."

- John Thorson

## Water With a Sense of Place

By Susan Duncan

Why did you choose the Greater Gallatin Watershed as a place to live? Real estate professionals emphasize "location, location, location". But, really, isn't it about - "the water"? Water determines habitat for plants, animals, and people. Plant habitats create landscape. The hot, dry west facing slopes of the Bridger Mountains support mostly grass and wildlife winter range, while the wetter, north facing slopes of the Gallatin Range to the south are heavily forested. Habitat affects where people and animals choose to live.

Water is essential to life. All living things – plants, animals, and humans - in this watershed get water from within the watershed. The need for water bonds us into an inter-dependent community. Through the water, we share one Life.

For the human residents of the Gallatin Valley, water is critical to lifestyle – food production, processing, and preparation; washing clothes, dishes, and personal hygiene; water and sewer systems, jobs in business and industry, and recreation from



Cherry River Fishing Access Site, location of GGWC's 4th Annual Fall Tour. Photo Courtesy of GGWC

bird watching to skiing to fly fishing.

Water is necessary for economic, industrial, and residential growth. What if we don't have enough? Could we get more from outside our watershed? Los Angeles imports water from Owens Valley, the Colorado River, and the Feather River through the California Aqueduct. Denver diverts water from watersheds west of the Continental Divide to the dry plains east of the Rockies. Who covets our water?

How will we allocate the water we have? Agricultural irrigation systems have insured a green valley and recharge of water tables

**"Water" continued page 2**

## GGWC Rain Barrel and Rain Garden!

The Greater Gallatin Watershed Council rain barrel was successfully installed at the Beall Park Community Center earlier this year. The barrel was exhibited at the MOSS Watershed Festival in May. A second rain barrel will be painted and displayed at the festival in 2010. Thank you to all our volunteers who helped paint the barrel. We also thank the Gilhouses Foundation, Owenhouse ACE Hardware, and Aaron's Rain Barrels for their support.



Benjamin Manion with the GGWC's Rain Barrel.

GGWC is happy to announce a new and exciting partnership with the City of Bozeman and Sweet Pea Nursery! The partners will design and install a demonstration rain garden at the New City Hall at 121 N. Rouse in 2010. The garden will be used to show residents how rain gardens function, its purpose, how a garden can help protect water quality in the Gallatin watershed, and how homeowners can build a garden. For more information on these projects, please contact Sharlyn at [info@greatergallatin.org](mailto:info@greatergallatin.org).

## Letter from the GGWC Chair

**D**ear Gallatin Valley Residents and Visitors,

After an unforgettable summer with what seemed to me to be more than our share of cool days and rain, it's again time to take stock of what GGWC has been up to these last several months. In reading this our newest newsletter, you'll find that GGWC continues to stay busy with a number of exciting new projects while continuing our water quality assessment work.

As you may recall, GGWC's Annual Meeting on January 21 was a tremendous success. Not only was it a successful fund-raiser but the get-together brought GGWC's name and awareness of our work more into the limelight. Our fishing partners, notably those at Hatchopedia.com, held their Big Fish Contest and fundraiser in Bozeman in June and donated all their proceeds to us. This gift from Hatchopedia.com, in addition to grants and donations, allowed us to continue our Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring program this year. Our stream teams descended upon Hyalite, Bridger, Bozeman, and Mandeville Creeks this summer, scooping up a lot of great data to gauge how these streams are faring these days. You may have seen our op-ed piece in the Bozeman Chronicle in June which raised our growing concern for water quality impairments in some areas, especially on Bozeman (Sourdough) Creek near Bogert Park and downstream. Much yet to be learned and written on this topic so stay tuned! Thanks again to Hatchopedia.com, our Stream Team Volunteers, and all those who helped make our work possible for the benefit of everyone who enjoys our watershed's creeks and rivers!

### Did You Know?

Pet waste contains nutrients that encourage weed and algae growth in our streams, lakes and ponds.



Throwing toys into the GGWC Rain Barrel with a catapult. Photo courtesy of Candace Hamlin

GGWC has been working with Belgrade and Bozeman businesses, the City of Bozeman, and others to implement two exciting new programs. The first is the rain barrel concept which has been used so successfully in other communities. These new-fangled rain barrels capture runoff from residential and commercial buildings which then provides water for ornamental plantings and gardens. As Bozeman, Belgrade, and our other watershed communities work to not only address water quality but also to raise more of our own food locally (even chickens now in Bozeman!), these rain barrels are a great asset to add value to a home or business location. This new spin on a very old idea is really starting to take off in our area. A related initiative is the installation of rain gardens which are runoff infiltration areas for our homes, streets, boulevards, and businesses that direct water down into the ground instead of running along our streets and gutters carrying sediment and other pollutants into our streams. Read on in this and in future newsletters to see where our first rain gardens will appear in our community!

GGWC and the Gallatin

Conservation District strengthened our partnership this year with another grant from the CD to help cover basic operations of our watershed group and to strengthen our ability to fund our coordinator position. In addition, we're working together via another grant source to identify watershed restoration priorities for our watershed. Once this plan is completed later this year, we will be able to use it to inform landowners and others about those areas most critical to ensure good stream health and water quality.

I know you'll find this latest version of our newsletter both informative and interesting. We also hope it will inspire our readers to pitch in and help us do this work so critical to all of us who live and work in the Gallatin Watershed. The more we learn about the land and water resources of our watershed, the more convinced I am that conserving our natural resources will only come through our collective efforts and resolve. Please contact us at [info@greatergallatin.org](mailto:info@greatergallatin.org) if you have questions, would like to volunteer or wish to learn more.

Sincerely,

Tom Hinz, Chair

### "Water" Continued

for nearly 150 years. Urban and residential development is demanding a larger share. Water for agriculture supports open space for wildlife habitat, groundwater recharge, and that rural, "small town feel". Water for residential and urban uses supports the tax base and jobs. We need both. But, untreated runoff and treated sewage effluent discharge into streams as "waste" water. Can we do better? Our choices affect our lifestyle and the quantity and quality of the water we pass to downstream users.

Susan Duncan is a board member of the GGWC and the Association of Gallatin Agricultural Irrigators (AGAI), Belgrade, MT.

## Quotable Quotes

“A river seems a magic thing. A magic, moving, living part of the very earth itself.”

- Laura Gilpin, 1949

## Gallatin Conservation District News

By Marcie Murnion-Learn

Greetings from the Gallatin Conservation District!

The Gallatin CD has been busy with several projects this summer and three in particular are benefiting the overall health of our watershed. The first project was the development of metal weed signs that have been placed at water recreation sites and trailheads. The goal is to bring awareness to folks about the importance of managing noxious weeds along waterways and trails.

We’ve also developed a larger concrete diversion block for the purpose of diverting irrigation water. Irrigation users are often required to ‘chase’ the water and frequently construct gravel diversion dams to divert water into their ditch. With the use of diversion blocks, the need to build gravel dams is eliminated, creating a much cleaner and efficient method to divert water. A 310 permit is required to divert irrigation water from a perennial stream/river.

The third project involves our small acreage program. The CD Resource Technician, Dan Durham, has provided on-site consultations with 90 landowners so far. For landowners with water resources, these visits have created an overall awareness on improving management along riparian areas. For additional information or to participate, please call Dan at 522-4016. To learn more about CD programs please visit: [www.gallatincd.mt.nacdn.net](http://www.gallatincd.mt.nacdn.net). org

Marcie Murnion-Learn, is the District Administrator for the Gallatin Conservation District, Bozeman, MT.

## Holiday Art Competition Winners

By Sharlyn Izurieta

The Greater Gallatin Watershed Council’s 1st Annual Holiday Art Competition was held during the summer and fall of 2009. Entrants, both amateur and professional artists from around Montana, submitted a variety of art from photographs to water color paintings. The four winners are Kip Sikora, Missoula, Anna Horton, Big Sky, Jenn Helvey, Bozeman, and Krista Morey, Bozeman. The winning art can be viewed at the GGWC’s website, [www.greatergallatin.org](http://www.greatergallatin.org).

The winning art will be reproduced as a holiday card for the 2009 holiday season. Cards will be for sale at local businesses during the holiday season, at the Emerson’s Holiday Bazaar, November 21st, the Help Center’s 32nd Annual Holiday Festival of the Arts, November 27th and 28th, and the Bozeman Angler, 23 E. Main Street, during the Christmas Stroll, December 5th. The cards are a great way to share a little bit of Montana with your family and friends during the holiday season and to support your local watershed group.

In addition, the winning art and other top entries will be displayed at the holiday events and the Greater Gallatin Watershed Council’s Annual Meeting and Silent Auction, January 21st, 2010



Snowy Woods by Jenn Helvey

at the Holiday Inn, Bozeman.

For more information about the holiday cards and art competition, please contact Sharlyn Gunderson-Izurieta, Watershed Coordinator at 219-3739 or [sgizuri@gmail.com](mailto:sgizuri@gmail.com).

### Did You Know?

*Wetlands absorb excess nutrients, sediment, and other pollutants before they reach rivers, lakes, and other waterbodies.*

## Help Support the Gallatin Watershed ✂

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation payable to the Greater Gallatin Watershed Council:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$75 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$Other

\_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in volunteering my valuable time to help the GGWC

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION**

## Gallatin Stream Teams 2009!

GGWC's volunteer stream monitoring program recently completed its second year collecting data from local streams. Volunteers met three times in July, August and September to collect valuable data from from Bozeman (Sourdough), Bridger, Mandeville, and Hyalite creeks. Once again, GGWC will host a mini-symposium in February, 2010 to share results with the greater Gallatin community. We hope to see you there! Support provided by the MT Dept. of Environmental Quality and the Gallatin Local Water Quality District, and the Gallatin Conservation District.



Gallatin Stream Team Volunteers collecting macroinvertebrates. Photo courtesy of GGWC



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## Kids Korner

### Tidbits from Tom the Trout



TOM THE TROUT HEARD AN AMAZING STORY ABOUT RENNER SKIDMORE. RENNER, 7, RECENTLY DONATED A HARD-EARNED DOLLAR TO THE GREATER GALLATIN WATERSHED COUNCIL. HE LEARNED FROM HIS DAD, PETER SKIDMORE, HOW IMPORTANT THE STREAMS, RIVERS, LAKES & WETLANDS ARE TO THE GALLATIN WATERSHED. AFTER LISTENING TO HIS DAD, RENNER DECIDED THAT HE WANTED HIS DOLLAR TO HELP KEEP OUR WATER CLEAN AND HEALTHY. KIDS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

THANKS RENNER!!

Tom is a Westslope Cutthroat Trout, the only native trout in the Gallatin watershed.

The GGWC would like to thank the  
 Gallatin Conservation  
 District for their support  
 funding this newsletter.



Greater Gallatin Watershed Council  
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## Our Partners

Gallatin Local Water Quality District  
 Gallatin Conservation District  
 MT Dept. of Environmental Quality  
 Association of Gallatin Agricultural Irrigators  
 The Montana Watercourse  
 Hatchopedia.com  
 Blue Water Task Force  
 Thompson Creek Watershed Group

Come see us at our Annual "State of the Watershed" meeting  
 and Silent Auction January 21, 2010!