

# WATER WATCH SUMMER 2017

## HIGHLIGHTS

Upcoming Events

Meet the Summer Interns!

Jim's Adventures in the Field

SOLE & Idah2o Partnership

Photos from Summer

September 1, 2017

Hello Master Water Stewards!

What a spring and summer! We started with rivers over the banks and ended with days on end of hot, smoky skies. We've also been awash with education and outreach programs, made possible by help from our new summer interns, Emily Nightingale (introduced in the last newsletter), Sarah Olsen and Mercedes Rennison! We've been teaching all over North Idaho about water quality, macroinvertebrates, watersheds, and storm water runoff.

In addition, I've been traveling all across the state training new Master Water Stewards from Moscow to Driggs to Cascade, Ketchum, Sandpoint, Pierce, St. Maries, and beyond.

A few reminders as summer slowly changes to autumn: be sure to check your kits for expired or broken equipment. Check out your thermometers to be sure there's not a bubble in the fluid (thump it gently to move the bubble upward into the fluid chamber), and that everything is organized and ready to go. Let me know if you need monitoring supplies! Remember that anyone who has completed the IDAH2O workshop is always invited to any future workshop for no cost to you. We all need a refresher from time to time. Finally, I enjoy visiting monitoring sites, so if you'd like me to visit yours, simply drop me a line! I will also find a way to let you know when my travels take me close to your neck of the woods.

Happy monitoring!

Sincerely,

Jim Ekins

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Our Gem Symposium

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality Lake Management Plan team, are pleased to be hosting our 3rd "Our Gem" Coeur d'Alene Lake Symposium, to be held on November 14th at the Coeur d'Alene Resort. Again this year, it dovetails with the two-day Spokane River Forum Conference for three informative days of presentations.

The Symposium fee is only \$20; the combined fee for Our Gem and Spokane River Forum is \$105.  
[spokaneriver.net/spokane-river-forum-conference](http://spokaneriver.net/spokane-river-forum-conference)

### Spokane River Forum

Organized in cooperation with the Our Gem Symposium, the 2016 Spokane River Forum Conference brings together experts and interested parties to share information about the Spokane River. Topics include water quality, water quantity, recreation and stewardship. **Agenda and Conference Registration:**  
[spokaneriver.net/Spokane-river-forum-conference](http://spokaneriver.net/Spokane-river-forum-conference)

Sample Topics include:

**Water Quality: Green Chemistry; Stormwater and Wastewater Management; Toxics Task Force; Local Source Control; PCBs and Contaminants of Concern; Non-Point Source Pollution Reduction and Agricultural Practices; Best Management Practices and Green Solutions; DO TMDL Implementation.**

**Water Quantity: Water Collaboration Between Sovereigns; Water Availability; Instream Flows; Irrigation Design Standards and Case Studies, Water Rights and Adjudication.**

**Recreation and Stewardship: Shoreline Management and Restoration; Spokane River Water Trail; Fisheries, Educational Outreach.**

### WALPA (Washington Area Lakes Protection Association) Conference

Washington State Lakes Protection Association (WALPA) will have its annual conference in Spokane this year, October 11-13, 2017. This conference will have a strong focus on Idaho, including a plenary talk from Idaho DEQ and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. One of our planned sessions this year will focus on the importance of citizen science on lakes and streams, and I am considering submitting a presentation proposal related to IDAH2O.

WALPA is a non-profit organization formed in 1986 by a group of volunteers concerned for the future of lakes. WALPA has grown to more than 400 members that include lakeside residents, lake associations, recreationists, scientists, educators, legislators, and local and state agencies from Washington and Idaho. You can learn more about our organization at [www.walpa.org](http://www.walpa.org).

Conference registration is open now:

<http://www.walpa.org/annual-conference>

Registration includes a year's WALPA membership.

### Fall 2016 Water Resources/IWWRI Seminar Series at University of Idaho

Almost every Tuesday during the Fall 2017 semester, you are invited to sign into an informative webinar related to water resources. While these can be a little "academic" at times, other webinars feature practitioners in the water resources management field, and can be a lot of fun to watch.

**Join in from anywhere on Zoom at:**

<https://uidaho.zoom.us/j/943388763388763>

# WATER WATCH SUMMER 2017

## MEET THE SUMMER INTERNS!



**Meet Sarah Olsen**  
**Idah2o/IGERT Graduate Intern**

Sarah Olsen is a graduate student at University of Idaho associated with the Interdisciplinary water resources doctoral program, IGERT. Her research looks at fostering positive relationships between scientists and the public, and she is especially interested in science communication and citizen science. She has just finished her first year of her doctoral program in education, and has been happy to be getting her feet wet outside teaching students in May and June. She has a love of teaching watershed science, and has had fun trying to incorporate more storytelling into her teaching. Turns out roaming the creek in grandma's backyard looking at water bugs was good for something after all!



**Meet Emily Nightingale**  
**Undergraduate Water Outreach Intern**

Emily Nightingale, North Idaho College graduate and University of Idaho student, has spent the last two years in intensive water quality related internships. In 2015, she worked on the Hayden Lake Floating Treatment Wetland research project as a summer INBRE intern and continued on the following spring to intern for UI, focusing on a range of stormwater issues and chemistry. Emily developed more environmental science experience when she took a month-long international volunteer trip to New Zealand, where she helped restore a riparian zone around a native Maori stream by planting Manuka Trees. Currently, she is learning about citizen science and science communication and having a great time teaching young students about water while sparking their interest in natural resources!



**Meet Mercedes Rennison**  
**Undergraduate Graphic Design Intern**

Mercedes Rennison is an undergraduate student at the University of Idaho studying Studio Art & Design. She is working with the UI Water Outreach Team and Idah2o on several graphic design projects focusing on communicating information about water. This summer, she has been helping to develop three additional Cleaner. Water. Faster. interpretive signs for the Spokane-Coeur d'Alene-Post Falls Centennial Trail and a brochure informing Idaho landowners about the benefits of growing and maintaining riparian barriers. Mercedes is passionate about art and has enjoyed learning about water quality while helping the team communicate water information through design!



# WATER WATCH SUMMER 2017

## JIM'S ADVENTURES IN THE FIELD

Having just returned from six weeks of traveling throughout Idaho gives me an opportunity to reflect on all the IDAH2O workshops and other teaching around the state. I met some wonderful people along the way, and am proud to have grown the IDAH2O program in 2017 by 57 Master Water Stewards and 24 new Project WET certified educators! (40 more Master Water Stewards are slated for a workshop on Monday, September 11th).

Before Spring started, it seems, I traveled to Pocatello and Twin Falls to begin teaching Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) in those towns. Each workshop sported eight participants and many great laughs. Starting in early spring, I taught a tailored workshop for residents and people who work in the Northeast Lake Coeur d'Alene area (Blue Bay, Wolf Lodge Bay, and Beauty Bay areas). On April 21st, in partnership with Kootenai-Shoshone SWCD, Blue Bay Community Center, and the Western Competitive Grant. 8 participants came out to the Blue Bay Community Center and we were able to hold the field session on Blue Creek, across the street from the Center!

Coeur d'Alene's workshop happened two weeks later on May 6th. Partnering with the Lake Coeur d'Alene WaterKeepers, Kootenai Environmental Alliance, the McGovern Research Forest, and the U-Idaho Coeur d'Alene Center, 14 new Master Water Stewards were added to the rolls.

After a four-week hiatus in the workshops came two big teaching circuits around most of Idaho. First one brought me to Moscow and Driggs and then back to CDA. Moscow's workshop on June 10th enjoyed a cool but pleasant outdoor classroom session and a new field site at Heron's Hideout, a restored stream and park in town. Eight new stewards participated, and one steward, doing a restoration project on the Palouse River in Pullman, re-took the class as a refresher.

I drove from there to Driggs, camping high above Lolo Pass on the Idaho-Montana border, and then via the Bitterroot Valley, Lost Trail Pass, Salmon, and the Lemhi Valley. I packed in back-to-back IDAH2O and Project Wet workshops. Several staff members from the region's Soil and Water Conservation Districts, all with a strong watershed protection educational mission, created an educational retreat from this opportunity and attended both days. There were several members of the Henry's Fork Chapter of the Idaho Master Naturalists present, too. I was also able to improve my connections with local agencies including Idaho Department of Environmental Quality.

Returning from that trip required a quick turnaround into my second teaching circuit of the summer. En route to the Cascade IDAH2O workshop, I co-taught to a group of middle school girls through a partnership with the

*Panorama View of Boulder Lake Outflow area (Jim Ekins, 2017)*





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## JIM'S ADVENTURES IN THE FIELD



*Jim at Camp Wooten in July 2017*



*Very high water at Driggs (Jim Ekins, 2017)*



*Team testing water at a summer camp (Jim Ekins, 2017)*

Wild Science Explorers and McCall Outdoor Science School's Women Outside With Science (WOWS) program. We spent a night on the N Fk Payette River, learning about stream macroinvertebrates, and then another night by Boulder Meadows Reservoir, hiking to Boulder Lake to deliver a program on lake ecology. Teaching the IDAH2O workshop in Cascade, ID for the first time was a joy. Partnering with the Valley County Extension office and the Emergency Operations Center, a dozen new Master Water Stewards came aboard.

Oh, I should not forget that I also had an opportunity to do two campfire interpretive presentations at Cascade Reservoir State Park. Ranger Beth Shadd created the opportunity, and I was fortunate to have both kids and adults at both events.

The second half of that teaching circuit was filled with teaching about watershed science at the Central Idaho Natural Resources camp. 45 middle and high school kids attended, and had an opportunity to learn about five natural resource areas: watersheds, forestry, range, wildlife, and soils.

I returned home for a quick 4th of July holiday turnaround, only to return to the road for one last circuit. This time, the teaching was all focused on youth, with the CL2NI "Camp Wooten" 4-H camp at the start. The largest camp by far this summer, 150 or so middle- and high-school kids learned all about the water cycle, water availability, stream ecology, and pond ecology during multiple hour-long sessions. Next up was the Clearwater County 6th Grade Forestry Tour, with 45 campers and seven teen leaders. I taught a different arrangement of watershed science, pond ecology, and water cycle science activities. The year's circuit teaching ended with the Benewah County 6th Grade Forestry Tour, focusing on the water cycle and pond/lake ecology.

A total of 2874 miles, 81 adults, and 320 youth later, and I am very happy to be able to stick around my base of operations in Coeur d'Alene for a while! Now, on to teaching at lots of local day camps from Sandpoint to Lewiston until late August!



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## OTHER UPDATES

### Selkirk Outdoor Leadership and Education (SOLE) & IDAH2O

#### Bring Water Quality Monitoring to Vocational Rehabilitation Program for North Idaho Teens

Students in the SOLE leadership program established a new monitoring site near Chewelah, WA as they learned about careers in natural resources. They collected and entered data with summer IDAH2O graduate intern, Sarah Olsen. Their big question: Does monitoring make a difference for the environment? Knowledge is power!

## SUMMER 2017 PHOTOS



Remember to contact us if you need any replacement supplies for your IDAH2O kits. If you are no longer using your kit on a regular basis, I can re-assign it to another Master Water Steward! And finally, I would love to visit your stream or lake monitoring site. Simply send me an email and I'll work with you to schedule in a visit.