

**State of Montana's Response
to Public Comments on the**

***2020 UCFRB Clark Fork
Watershed Education Program
Funding Amendment***

Prepared by the Montana Natural Resource Damage Program

November 2020

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Section I. Introduction

On September 10, 2020, the Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP) submitted to the public for consideration a proposal to allocate \$1.0 million of the UCFRB Restoration Fund - Grant Project Excess to the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CFWEP), Education Fund. The proposal would allocate UCFRB Restoration Funds totaling \$1.0 million from unspent grant projects approved between 2001 and 2011 (numerous projects were completed, but all approved funding was not spent). The 30-day public comment period concluded on October 11, 2020.

The proposal would provide \$1.0 million to continue CFWEP at least through school year 2023-2024. Funding will be consistent with the Amendment and Section 7.2 of the Process Plan, with the funds to be transferred from the UCFRB Restoration Fund to the NRDP Education Fund. NRDP and CFWEP will continue its task order under the contract with Montana Tech to implement the educational projects. On a biannual basis in each even numbered year, NRDP and the Advisory Council will continue to provide input to the Trustee Restoration Council on the CFWEP proposed budgets, and the milestones achieved during the previous years.

NRDP sent notice of this opportunity for public comment to approximately 160 individuals/entities on its mailing list, issued a press release, placed 7 sets of ads in area newspapers, and posted to NRDP's website, <https://dojmt.gov/lands/notices-of-public-comment/>. A total of 25 comment letters on the proposal to allocate \$1.0 million of the UCFRB Restoration Fund - Grant Project Excess to the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CFWEP) Education Fund were received. All letters were in support of the proposal. One additional supporting letter was received after the comment period deadline.

As detailed in the response below, no changes are proposed to this amendment.

Category 1: General Support, Proposed Allocation of Funding to CFWEP

Comments: Twenty-five comment letters were received during the public comment period; all indicating general support for the CFWEP program, the services it provides, and for the additional funding proposed. One comment letter supporting the proposal was received after the comment period closed.

Response: NRDP appreciates the indicated support for the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program and the proposed amendment.

Appendix A
List of Comments

No.	Individual/Association	City/Area
1	Bill Callaghan	Butte, MT
2	Sara Ibis	Missoula, MT
3	Sara Lester	Butte, MT
4	Hillary Lester	
5	Johanna Lester	
6	Kayla Lappin	Butte, MT
7	Dennis Lester	Three Forks, MT
8	Brooks Phillips	
9	Kate Mattern	
10	Stacey Mannix	Lincoln, MT
11	Jennifer Nardiello	Butte, MT
12	Jessica Henze	Deer Lodge, MT
13	Bob Orrino	Anaconda, MT
14	Ian Magruder	Missoula, MT
15	Jenna Briggs	Missoula, MT
16	Katherine Koster	Missoula, MT
17	Kimberly Johnson	Missoula, MT
18	Shannon O'Brien	Missoula, MT
19	Jessica Smith	Missoula, MT

CFWEP Funding Recommendation Response to Comments Appendix A: List of Comments

20	Patty Heard	
21	Sherri Voll	Butte, MT
22	Rae Baerlocher	Missoula, MT
23	Kathleen Foley	Butte, MT
24	Gretchen Druliner	
25	Wyatt Nielsen	Missoula, MT
26 (Late)	Joe Griffin	Butte, MT

From: [Bill Callaghan](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation
Date: Thursday, September 10, 2020 7:41:02 PM

As a founding member of CFWEP, I am 100% in favor of this funding allocation. Only an educated public can ensure the future of the Clark Fork watershed. CFWEP is an intricate part of our restoration efforts. I can't think of a better way to continue this endeavor. I wholeheartedly support this allocation.
I am grateful to be a part of this undertaking.
Kind regards to all the folks supporting these restoration works.

Bill Callaghan

From: [Sara Ibis](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Friday, September 11, 2020 2:37:15 PM

To whom it may concern;

I am writing to express support and to encourage allocating extra funds to the CFWEP program. I am a teacher in Missoula and I've had the privilege of working with the CFWEP program the last 3 years. The program teaches both vital science and history content to the students who are the future stewards of our community resources. I cannot say enough about the quality of this program - it is truly exceptional! Please allocate extra funds to the CFWEP program.

Sincerely,
Sara Ibis

--

Sara Ibis
3rd Grade Teacher
Rattlesnake Elementary
sibis@mcpsmt.org / 542-4050 ext. 4722
pronouns: she/her
([why using preferred pronouns matters \[colorado.edu\]](#))

From: [Lester, Sara](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 2:48:47 PM

I support allocating additional grant funding to the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program Fund. The Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CFWEP) provides necessary educational programming about the restoration and remediation of the Clark Fork Watershed for students. It also provides necessary teacher professional development for teachers. Before this program existed, the level of education about these important issues was low to non-existent. Education about the restoration and remediation of the watershed is just as important as the restoration itself so that future generations can continue to benefit and take care of our newly restored and remediated lands.

I have volunteered with CFWEP for the last few years, and I believe their outreach is a much needed asset in Butte and the surrounding areas.

Sara Lester
MBMG

Get [Outlook for iOS \[aka.ms\]](#)

From: [Hillary Lester](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 2:59:10 PM

To whom it may concern:

I support allocating additional grant funding to the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program Fund. The Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CFWEP) provides necessary educational programming about the restoration and remediation of the Clark Fork Watershed for students. It also provides necessary teacher professional development for teachers. Before this program existed, the level of education about these important issues was low to non-existent. Education about the restoration and remediation of the watershed is just as important as the restoration itself so that future generations can continue to benefit and take care of our newly restored and remediated lands.

Sincerely,

Hillary Lester
406.596.0203
hjlester@live.com

From: [Johanna Lester](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 3:08:24 PM

To the Montana Natural Resource Damage Program:

I support allocating additional grant funding to the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program Fund. The Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CFWEP) provides necessary educational programming about the restoration and remediation of the Clark Fork Watershed for students. It also provides necessary teacher professional development for teachers. Before this program existed, the level of education about these important issues was low to non-existent. Education about the restoration and remediation of the watershed is just as important as the restoration itself so that future generations can continue to benefit and take care of our newly restored and remediated lands.

Sincerely,

Johanna Lester

From: [Lappin, Kayla](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment.
Date: Monday, September 14, 2020 3:38:05 PM

To the Montana Natural Resource Damage Program:

I support allocating additional grant funding to the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program Fund. The Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CFWEP) provides necessary educational programming about the restoration and remediation of the Clark Fork Watershed for students. It also provides necessary teacher professional development for teachers. Education about the restoration and remediation of the watershed is just as important as the restoration itself so that future generations can continue to benefit and take care of our newly restored and remediated lands.

Sincerely,

Kayla Lappin

KAYLA LAPPIN

Communication & Events Coordinator
C: 406-221-6198

From: [Dennis Lester](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 12:49:54 PM

I support allocating additional grant funding to the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program Fund. The Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CFWEP) provides necessary educational programming about the restoration and remediation of the Clark Fork Watershed for students, their families, and the public at large. It also provides necessary professional development for teachers. Before this program existed, the level of education about these important issues was low to non-existent. Education about the restoration and remediation of the watershed is just as important as the restoration itself so that future generations can continue to benefit and take care of our newly restored and remediated lands. I have been volunteering for the creek cleanup in Butte and personally witness the students' engagement with the program and how all actions affect the watershed. The continued funding is the right thing to do for the state of Montana.

Dennis Lester
Pilot Plant Manager Sappington
28769 Sappington Road
Three Forks, Montana 59752
406 285.5162 Desk
406 570.9010 Cell



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From: [Brooks Phillips](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 2:41:39 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

I was trying to remember how long I have been working with CFWEP as a teacher and having them come into my classroom to do outreach education with my students. I know it has been no less than 15 years. The programs they have done with my students over the years have been invaluable. The kids look forward to their visits each year. For some it has opened their eyes to new careers available to them, for others it has given them hands on learning opportunities, and for all it has provided experiences that they otherwise may not have had. Please continue to support CFWEP and provide them with the funds that they need and deserve to continue their programs!

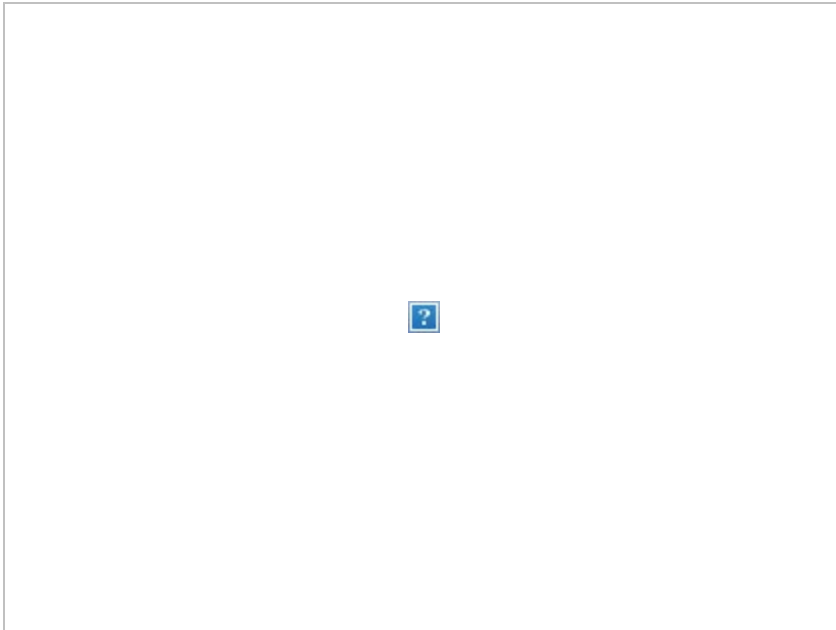
Thank you,
Brooks Phillips

From: [Katherine J Mattern](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 4:03:20 PM

I am writing to you to encourage your continued and impactful support of the CFWEP program. I have been affiliated with this fine group for several years now, and they are powerful educators who lead teachers with passionate objectives to create informed, active young students who will become future civic leaders and responsible citizens. In twenty years of teaching, CFWEP consistently provides the most locally-focused, fun, and memorable professional development to teachers, and the greatest student outreach....ANYWHERE! Please continue to support them in their financial endeavors in as big of a way as you can!

Sincerely,
Kate Mattern

--



From: [Stacey Mannix](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] CFWEP education
Date: Wednesday, September 16, 2020 5:43:59 AM

To whom it may concern,

CFWEP is a program that has helped me educationally bring science alive in my classroom for the last 11 years. They have hands on projects that reinforce the lessons I am teaching. They are a fantastic resource.

Stacey Mannix

Lincoln School

Lincoln MT

Sent from my iPhone Stacey Ann

From: [Jennifer Nardiello](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Wednesday, September 16, 2020 6:51:35 AM

Hello. My name is Jennifer Nardiello. I am a middle school science teacher in Butte, MT. I have worked with the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program for many years.

This program and its staff present unique material and education to thousands of students in Montana every year. They are always willing to go the extra mile for students.

Their program teaches students a lot about the natural resources in Montana and how the kids can best protect those resources for their future. This aspect of their programs is my favorite. It turns the kids into natural resource stewards. Making the students think about the future of the environment is hard to do sometimes. CFWEP does an excellent job of it.

Their teacher professional development is top notch as well. I have personally been through most of their teacher programs and they are immersive, informative, and highly applicable in my classroom.

I recommend that you allocate as much funding as possible to this program. The more kids and teachers we have educated about Montana's natural resources the better our state will be.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Nardiello
(406) 4228873
1001 W. Granite St.
Butte, MT 59701

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

From: [Jessica Henze](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment.
Date: Wednesday, September 16, 2020 7:35:55 AM

September 16, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CFWEP) funding allocation. I am a middle school science teacher in Deer Lodge, MT. As you may know, Deer Lodge is located in the largest superfund site in the US. My students are impacted by the pollution from so many years ago. One of our city wells has a very high arsenic and is no longer usable. My students benefit from the CFWEP programming every spring as it is place based and so very important for them to understand the long term implications that the mine waste is having on our town.

The five days of programming in which my students participate gives them historical background, first hand understanding of the current state of the environment, and a day in the field understand how science is used to assess habitats. During this field trip, students learn about water quality, bio-indicators, and so much more about the restoration process that CFWEP teaches about. Students understand how the superfund is improving the environment, and they know what the equipment is doing when they see a stretch of river being worked upon.

Please provide additional funding so that my students and so many others in Montana can benefit from this program for many years to come. CFWEP has become a staple in my classroom and community.

Respectfully,

Jessica Henze
7/8 Grade Science Teacher
EF Duvall Junior High School
Deer Lodge Schools
444 Montana Avenue
Deer Lodge, MT 59722

From: [Robert L Orrino](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB
Date: Thursday, September 17, 2020 8:25:54 AM

I am in total support of funding the CFWEP program.

This program has been a crucial part of my curriculum in my classroom.

I feel there is no other way that students in the Clark Fork Watershed will understand the history of mining and damage if the CFWEP team does not continue to do what they are doing.

Bob Orrino
Biology Teacher
Anaconda High School

From: ian.magruder@nremontana.com
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Thursday, September 17, 2020 11:33:33 AM
Attachments: [CFWEP NRDP funding 091320.pdf](#)

Please include my comments which are attached for this public notice.

Ian Magruder
(406) 439-0049
northernrockiesengineering.com [northernrockiesengineering.com]

September 13, 2020

NRDP

1720 9th Avenue

Helena, MT 59620-1425

Re: Proposed CFWEP Allocation of \$1.0 million of the UCFRB Restoration Fund

To whom it may concern,

I support the proposed transfer from unspent restoration grants to fund CFWEP through at least school year 2023-2024. CFWEP has been a great asset for community outreach and education regarding remediation and restoration of Upper Clark Fork watershed and affected communities. They also provide an important local component to science and natural resource curriculums for local schools. CFWEP does a great job and should be funded to continue that work.

Ian Magruder

6 Columbine Rd

Missoula, MT 59802

From: jennakbriggs@gmail.com
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] CFWEP
Date: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 5:35:36 PM

I support allocating the funds for CFWEP education.

Jenna Briggs
Missoula County Public Schools

From: [Katherine Koster](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment.
Date: Thursday, September 24, 2020 11:05:43 AM

Greetings,

I have been a fifth-grade teacher at Rattlesnake Elementary School for the past 4 years. During this time, I have come to love and appreciate the amazing work that CFWEP does with students in Missoula County and beyond. The CFWEP program engages all students as scientists and asks them to use data and historical evidence to draw conclusions about the health of our watershed. My students have had the opportunity of not only participating in CFWEP in Missoula but we have also traveled to Butte to explore the mining town. CFWEP in Butte did an amazing job teaching students about Butte's history and the environmental impacts of mining.

This program is critical to our students in Montana. In some schools, CFWEP is the only science topic that is taught during the school year. It is so important that students continue to learn about our watershed because water is a valuable natural resource that needs to be protected.

Please continue to fund this valuable program, CFWEP.

Katherine Koster

From: [Kimberly Johnson](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] comments
Date: Thursday, September 24, 2020 12:30:00 PM

I support allocating the funds for CFWEP education. Every year my students learn so much about the area in which they live. This curriculum helps them understand how very important our local resources are and how we need to take care of them.

*Kimberly Johnson
5th Grade Teacher
Franklin Elementary School
406-542-4020 ext 4396*

From: [Shannon O'Brien](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Thursday, September 24, 2020 12:49:37 PM

Greetings,

I am writing to express my gratitude for all your work, **and especially encourage generous investment in/funding allocation for the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CFWEP).**

My son studied ecosystems throughout the 2019-2020 academic year when he was in Ms. Ibis' 5th grade class at Rattlesnake Elementary in Missoula. As a school volunteer and "remote learning" parent, I was so impressed with the curricular contributions the CFWEP made to the students to both introduce new concepts and reinforce previous learning. As a bonus, I was able to learn with my child about the historical perspectives of the Milltown Dam and restoration and clean-up of our watershed. The engagement of college students in the CFWEP program was encouraging to see as well. My boy, as many pre-teen children do, really looks up to college students. The enthusiasm of "science is cool and fun" permeated.

Again, thanks for all you do, and please accept this as public comment in favor of budget allocation for the Clark Fork Watershed Program.

Best regards,
Shannon

Shannon O'Brien
she/her
406.274.3805
www.growbuildlead.com [growbuildlead.com]

From: [Jessica Smith](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment.
Date: Thursday, September 24, 2020 2:03:58 PM

This is a phenomenal program and should continue to educate young people as long as possible. Please continue to support this program in whatever way you can.

Thank you,

--

Jessica Smith
CS Porter Middle School
Social Studies/HPE
7th Grade
jlsmith@mcsplt.org

From: [Patty Heard](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Thursday, September 24, 2020 3:22:01 PM

I am writing to express my gratitude for all your work, **and especially encourage generous investment in/funding allocation for the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CFWEP).**

Thank you. Patty Heard

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sherri Voll](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocated Public Comment
Date: Friday, September 25, 2020 10:31:02 AM

This is such a kind and loving program in Butte. It's an area where I personally feel kids can really benefit from such a program. To receive funding is so important so this program continuing. Thank you for your time and I hope you can see the need also to help this community. Sherri Voll

From: [Rae Baerlocher](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Cc: [Guscio, Dalit](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Monday, September 28, 2020 2:46:51 PM

I would like to write in favor of continuing public funding for CFWEP.

As a previous 5th grade and current 7th grade teacher, this program is one of the best that I have used in the past to develop students who are lifelong learners and advocate for their communities.

Even though this curriculum is only a week long, I saw my past students transform to being socially and environmentally conscious, empathetic, science informed citizens. They were able to use scientific reasoning to make informative conclusions, and also see how even in the 5th grade, they were important to their community and its watersheds.

Additionally, in my last 2 years of teaching 7th grade science, I have used parts of the curriculum to provide interactive review when determining what is essential to healthy ecosystems and the impact of abiotic substances. When doing this review, it is always exciting to see how many students still have basic knowledge of their watersheds and why it is essential to protect our water sources.

As we continue to see the effects of global warming and protections to our public lands stripped away for a few monetary gains, I cannot think of a more important program to have in our schools.

--

[Rae Baerlocher](#) ([she](#), [her](#), [hers](#)) [Why it's important to use correct pronouns \[colorado.edu\]](#)

[7th Grade](#)

[Meadow Hill](#)

Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today.

-Malcom X

Received by NRDP

09/29/2020

Comment 23

Re: "UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment."

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in support for additional funding for the CFWEP program in hopes that it continues to educate the students of Butte.

I have been a 7th grade biology teacher for the past 23 years at East Middle School in Butte, MT. My students have been fortunate enough to participate in classroom instruction and field trips to restoration sites for the last fifteen years. I teach approximately 125-140 students each year and am one of three biology teachers involved in the CFWEP program at our school.

From the very beginning, my students were highly engaged in learning of the changes to our watershed particularly Silver Bow Creek, the surrounding mine tailings and the water quality, vegetation, fish, macroinvertebrates and the toxins involved in those changes. My students are given instruction regarding the history of mining in Butte, the Clark Fork River flood of 1908, the effect on the Milltown Dam near Missoula, the processes of mining, milling, concentrating and smelting, and what constitutes a healthy stream (pH, temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, etc.), to name just a few of the concepts presented to my students. Each year, the instructors have developed a wonderful rapport with my students and encourage them all to be future stewards of the remediation and restoration in and around Butte.

The field trip to area restoration/remedial sites are of tremendous value to my students as they receive first-hand experience in conducting investigations using probes to measure the quality of the streams as well as record and interpret the data later on at Montana Tech. Their data is compiled by the CFWEP biologists and my students are thrilled with their contributions to the research involved.

I can be reached at East Middle School in Butte (533-2600) to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Foley

From: [Gretchen Druliner](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment
Date: Thursday, October 1, 2020 9:11:56 PM

Hello,

I am writing in support of funding CFWEP. They are an excellent community resource, providing science and environmental education that gives students the information to understand stewardship and become advocates for the intersection of public health and the environment.

Kind regards,
Gretchen Druliner

From: [Nielsen, Wyatt](#)
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UCFRB CFWEP 2020 Funding Allocation Public Comment.
Date: Friday, October 9, 2020 1:18:44 PM

Dear Reviewers,

My name is Wyatt Nielsen, and I have been involved in CFWEP since the beginning of 2019 as an intern and educator. CFWEP should be funded as appropriate for the education powerhouse it is.

This program is an asset to the Missoula community and a once-in-a-lifetime experience for the students who participate. It reaches all of the elementary schools in the Missoula Public School District, and so effects an entire generation of this community. CFWEP also exposes students from all backgrounds to the importance of research and universities in their community. In 2019, students were brought onto campus for our field testing lab day to see the campus and meet University of Montana President, Seth Bodnar.

Students are exposed not only to a comprehensive history of the Clark Fork Watershed, but a deep dive into watershed science and hydrology. Children learn about the effects of pollution on water tables, how water flows through an ecosystem, and how the community uses this water every day. At the end of the week, students conduct tests on the water of the Clark Fork with actual equipment including a turbidimeter and labquests with probes. After these tests are done, they are returned to the classroom and the data are analyzed to make conclusions of the effectiveness of the Clark Fork Superfund Project on restoring riparian health.

CFWEP is important and should be funded as such, not only because it teaches our children about science using the world they know around them, but because it puts the science in their hands and gives them the tools to make educated predictions and conclusions. CFWEP does this for an entire region of Montana every year.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

From: jgriffin.redmountain@gmail.com
To: [Natural Resource Damage Program](#)
Cc: [Joe Griffin](#); [Brandl, Ravelynn](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of support for additional funding for the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program
Date: Sunday, October 11, 2020 2:10:11 PM
Attachments: [Griffin letter to NRD support for CFWEP 10-11-20.pdf](#)

NRDP Staff,

Please accept my letter (attached) requesting additional Natural Resource Damage funding for the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program. Please notify me of any meetings of the Advisory Council or the Trustee Council to discuss that funding.

<<...>>

Sincerely,

Joe Griffin

Retired Superfund Project Manager, MT DEQ

406 560-6060

The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift. — Albert Einstein

Redmountain HydrogeoLogic



October 9, 2020

Natural Resource Damage Program
1720 9th Avenue
Helena, Montana 59620-1425

RE: Regarding additional funding for the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program

NRDP Staff and UCFRB Advisory Council Members:

As someone with a 30-year career in the Superfund cleanup that spans all three NPL sites of the upper Clark Fork, I write in support of allocating \$1 million of additional Natural Resource Damage Program funding for the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program.

I must disclose that I am one of the founders of the program, am currently one of their voluntary technical advisors and have spent countless volunteer hours in the classroom and on Silver Bow Creek, Warm Springs Creek and the Clark Fork with students from Butte to Missoula.

The idea for the watershed program began with a group of teachers at East Middle School and Butte High School along with local environmental scientists, who had been taking their students on field trips to observe the recovery of Silver Bow Creek and to gauge the recovery using the biotic index of aquatic insects. We were instilling a sense of scientific discovery and an appreciation of the environment in those students. We believed, and still believe we are building a foundation of environmental stewardship for the future by teaming teachers, scientists, and university students with elementary and high school students.

With the overwhelming intricacy of cleaning up a Superfund complex that includes three mega-sites, needing further subdivision into 13 operable units and spanning five counties, it must be understood that remedy and restoration will extend well into the future. It only makes sense to take a consistent and comprehensive watershed approach for K-12 environmental education so that we can pass along our appreciation of environmental stewardship and our lessons learned to the next generation.

The NRDP has been funding this extraordinarily successful education program since 2005, I urge protecting that investment by continuing your support. And please visit the CFWEP website at: <https://cfwep.org/>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Griffin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joe" being the most prominent part.

Joe Griffin

Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Retired