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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Whitefish High School Project FREEFLOW Partners with Whitefish Lake Institute on Research Funded by Nonpoint Source Mini Grant

WHITEFISH, MT, 1 NOVEMBER 2013 – Whitefish High School (WHS) and the Whitefish Lake Institute (WLI) today announced the completion of their “Investigation of Fluorometric Values on Viking Creek,” a study to be delivered to the Whitefish City Council.

WLI was awarded a Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Montana, Inc (SWCMDI) Education Mini Grant in May to pursue a needed water quality study on Viking Creek. The study extends the research of the “*Investigation of Septic Leachate to the Shoreline Areas of Whitefish Lake, Montana*” (Curtis & Koopal) published by WLI in 2012. The investigation provided results that identified areas of concern regarding septic leachate—a nonpoint source pollution—around the lake. The site where Viking Creek outfalls to Whitefish Lake was one of the areas of concern identified in the report. Of the 20 total sample sites in the Whitefish Lake investigation, Viking Creek had one of three positive human DNA biomarker results and the five highest overall values for a key study parameter.

Through this mini-grant project, WLI and Project FREEFLOW collaborated to conduct additional field research and provide scientific data and results to the Whitefish City Council. This research serves as companion information to the Whitefish Community Wastewater Management Program delivered earlier this year by the ad hoc Whitefish Community Wastewater Management Committee. Student participation included combined classroom time, field work, data analysis, and reporting. Students will present their findings in December to the Whitefish School District School Board, Whitefish City Council (or designee), and to WLI's Science Advisory Committee or Board of Directors.

About Whitefish High School Project FREEFLOW

Project FREEFLOW (Flathead River Educational Effort for Focused Learning in Our Watershed) is an extracurricular advanced field science program. Its purpose is to provide students with an opportunity to acquire and analyze water quality and habitat assessment data, develop an understanding of natural resource

management, and study current land use issues. Students involved participate in organizational meetings, conduct field studies, process and upload data, listen to professional presentations, perform technical writing, and present research to the public.

About Whitefish Lake Institute

Founded in 2005, the Whitefish Lake Institute is a 501 (3)(c) non-profit organization committed to acquiring scientific research, and to educating and engaging the local citizenry to protect the Whitefish area water resources of today, while providing a collective vision for tomorrow.

Media Note: Photos of students engaged in field work for this study are available upon request.

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