

550 East 1st Street #103
Whitefish, MT 59937

Voice: 406.862.4327
Fax: 406.862.0686

www.whitefishlake.org
info@whitefishlake.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Whitefish Lake Institute presents *Chris Ruffatto Excellence in Education Award* to Nicky Ouellet of Montana Public Radio

WHITEFISH, MT, February 8, 2018 – The Whitefish Lake Institute (WLI) presented the *Chris Ruffatto Excellence in Education Award* to Montana Public Radio reporter Nicky Ouellet at the Whitefish Chamber Annual Gala. Ouellet received this prestigious award for her extraordinary contribution to water quality education through her “*SubSurface: Resisting Montana’s Underwater Invaders*” podcast.

The podcast—aired in 5 episodes during November and December of last year—educated the public on scientists’ and resource managers’ efforts to understand and combat Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). Nicky travelled to the mid-west—a hotbed for aquatic invasive mussels—to conduct research into this pressing and complex issue. Each 20 minute segment delves into lessons learned from communities where zebra mussels exist and discusses the challenge now faced by all Montanans to prevent this unwelcome invader from entering our aquatic systems.

“Her work to closely examine and describe for Montanans the increasing threat of AIS constitutes a breakthrough in public education on water quality issues,” noted Mike Koopal, WLI’s Executive Director.

Nicky’s dedication supports those who work to prevent aquatic invasive species infestations, and community members who want to prevent them from our waters. Nicky’s prior work producing radio and web stories in northwest Montana has included excellent coverage on natural resource, land management, tribal, and political issues.

About Whitefish Lake Institute

Founded in 2005, the Whitefish Lake Institute is a 501 (3)(c) non-profit organization committed to science, education, and community stewardship to protect and improve Whitefish Lake and Whitefish area water resources today, while providing a collective vision for tomorrow.

Media Contact:

Lori Curtis, Science & Education Director
lori@whitefishlake.org
550 East 1st Street #103, Whitefish, MT 59937
Phone: 406.862.4327 ▪ Fax: 406.862.0686

Photo available
###