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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Whitefish Lake Institute announces the Ripple Effect Scholarship Fund

WHITEFISH, MT, March 21, 2017 – The *Ripple Effect Scholarship Fund* exists to accomplish WLI's goal of mentoring students as they follow their scientific curiosity, and encouraging them to continue their studies. The *Ripple Effect* formalizes and expands WLI's scholarship program to offer three different types of scholarships:

High School Student Entering a Four Year University Majoring in the Environmental Sciences

This \$500 scholarship is available to any Whitefish High School senior who is entering a four year university with plans to major in an environmental science field. Eligible majors include; environmental science/studies, environmental engineering, biology, and sustainability. Other majors will be considered if they demonstrate a link to an environmental emphasis.

University Student Who Completes an Internship at WLI

This \$1000 scholarship is awarded to an upper level university student who completes a successful internship with WLI during the course of a summer. This scholarship essentially serves as a stipend for the student toward their continuing education.

Graduate Thesis or Dissertation

Students with thesis proposals specific to Whitefish area water resources are encouraged to submit inquiries to WLI for consideration. Support to a thesis may be financial, advisory, and/or equipment to assist in their study design and execution.

WLI has for several years provided \$500 educational scholarships to university students completing summer internships with WLI. Upon learning of WLI's desire to further formalize and expand its education programming with more robust internship opportunities, long-time WLI members offered their support for our objective of advancing water quality and natural resource education. These funds have elevated our programming and internship grants to the next level.

All scholarships require students to engage in an application process that includes a letter of recommendation from an instructor familiar with student's work, a copy of official school transcripts, and a 300-500 word essay describing student's watershed ethic and why their ethic will help them become a good watershed steward. WLI staff will review applications and submit recommendations to the WLI Board of Directors for approval. Applications are due annually on April 1st and can be found on the WLI website www.whitefishlake.org.

The Whitefish School District will communicate the high school graduate scholarship, and the internship will be advertised with educators, colleges and universities. Graduate thesis opportunities are communicated directly to university professors. The number of awards issued annually will be based on the scholarship fund account balance up to a maximum of three awards. No award category will have more than one recipient annually. On-going support will be requested through funding challenges and grants.

This scholarship program bolsters WLI's commitment to educating citizens of all ages about water ecology and water quality issues. This includes educational programs for grades K-12, high school job shadow opportunities, educator in-service training, presentations to civic groups, and field trips hosted at the *Living Wetlands Interpretive Nature Trail*.

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 community vision for tomorrow.

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