2026 CLARK FORK SCIENCE FORUM

SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY

DAY 1

NOV. 4, 2026

08:00 AM

REGISTRATION & WELCOME

Check-in, grab your badge, and enjoy some coffee or tea.

9:00 AM

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Welcome from our host, Melissa Schaar with U.S. Geological Survey, and an overview of the day.

9:15 AM

KEYNOTE: BRIAN CHAFFIN, PH.D. | CLARK FORK COALITION

Leveraging ecological resilience theory and practice for science and policy in the Clark Fork River watershed

10:00 AM

15 MIN BREAK

10:15 AM - 12:15 PM

SESSION 1: TRACKING ECOSYSTEM RECOVERY THROUGH FOUR DECADES OF REMEDIATION AND RESTORATION

Moderated by Sam Carlson | Clark Fork Coalition

10:15 AM REMEDIATION IN THE UPPER CLARK FORK BASIN
Jessica Banaszak | DEQ, and Jason Rappe | U.S. EPA

10:30 AM FIFTEEN YEARS OF FLOODPLAIN RESTORATION IN THE UPPER CLARK FORK RIVER BASIN
Amy Sacry | Geum Environmental Consulting

10:45 AM TRENDS IN SURFACE WATER METAL CONCENTRATIONS, SOURCES, AND RISKS TO AQUATIC LIFE
Maddy Foster | U.S. Geological Survey

11:00 AM METAL TRENDS IN MACROINVERTEBRATE TISSUES AND STREAMBED SEDIMENT
Chris Hyder | U.S. Geological Survey

11:05 AM LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVES FROM MACROINVERTEBRATE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENTS FROM 1986-2025
Dave Stagliano | Montana Biological Survey

11:20 AM CONNECTING MACROINVERTEBRATE COMMUNITIES AND METAL CONCENTRATIONS
Michelle Fillion | U.S. Geological Survey

11:25 AM FISH POPULATION TRENDS
Nathan Cook | Natural Resource Damage Program

11:30 AM BREAK

11:45 AM PANEL DISCUSSION

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12:15-1:45 PM

LUNCH BREAK-ON YOUR OWN
Please enjoy lunch at a location of your choice.

1:45 PM

LIGHTNING TALKS Moderated by Lindsey King | U.S. Geological Survey

CONNECTING THE DOTS FOR RESILIENCY Dan Brewer | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

GEOMORPHOLOGY IN THE CLARK FORK Haylie Brown | U.S. Geological Survey

PROTECT THE PROCESS: MONTANA'S 310 LAW AS A TOOL FOR STREAM RESILIENCE
Radley Watkins | Missoula Conservation District

DOE GENESIS MISSION AWARD: AN AI-GUIDED MAP FOR BIOMINING CRITICAL MINERALS FROM MINE WASTE Johanna Blake | U.S. Geological Survey

GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE Tracy Campbell | City of Missoula

CLARK FORK BASIN DATA VISUALIZATION TOOL Noah Barbery | U.S. Geological Survey

2:15 PM

Q&A FOR ALL LIGHTNING TALKS

2:30 PM

15 MIN BREAK

2:45 PM - 4:30 PM

SESSION 2: HYDROGEOLOGY AND GROUNDWATER-SURFACE WATER INTERACTIONS Moderated by Stephanie Ewing | Montana State University

2:45 PM AN OVERVIEW OF MBMG'S HYDROGEOLOGIC INVESTIGATIONS OF THE DEER LODGE VALLEY Meggie Olson | Montana Bureau of Mines & Geology

3:00 PM GROUNDWATER-STREAM WATER INTERACTIONS IN THE UPPER CLARK FORK RIVER
Payton Gardner | University of Montana

3:15 PM THE EFFECTS OF GROUNDWATER-STREAM WATER INTERACTIONS ON STREAM WATER QUALITY IN THE UPPER CLARK FORK RIVER
Russell Krantz | University of Montana

3:30 PM DRONE-BASED THERMAL REMOTE SENSING FOR GROUNDWATER SEEP IDENTIFICATION: APPLICATION TO REMEDIATION AND FISH HABITAT ON THE UPPER CLARK FORK RIVER
Raja Nagasetty and Nick Thieme | MT Technological University

3:45 PM BREAK

4:00 PM PANEL DISCUSSION

4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

POSTER SESSION
Please enjoy light appetizers and beverages during the session.

2026 CLARK FORK SCIENCE FORUM

SCHEDULE

THURSDAY

DAY 2

NOV. 5, 2026

08:15 AM

CHECK-IN

Enjoy coffee and tea.

08:45 AM

WELCOME

Welcome from our host, Melissa Schaar, and an overview of the day.

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

SESSION 3: FOOD WEBS

Moderated by Ben Colman | University of Montana

9:00 AM **UNDERSTANDING SPATIOTEMPORAL PATTERNS OF UCFR DISSOLVED ORGANIC MATTER FOLLOWING FLOODPLAIN RESTORATION**
Arya Mohanan | DEQ

9:15 AM **MICROBIAL COMMUNITIES AND TRACE-ELEMENT CONTAMINATION IN THE UPPER CLARK FORK RIVER: COMPARING 2014 AND 2023**
Sara Eldridge | U.S. Geological Survey

9:30 AM **STUDYING SURVIVAL AND MOVEMENT OF UPPER CLARK FORK RIVER JUVENILE BROWN TROUT**
Caleb Uerling | Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

9:45 AM **FOOD WEBS AND BIOMAGNIFYING CONTAMINANTS: SELENIUM AS A POSSIBLE CAUSE OF FISH DECLINES IN THE UPPER CLARK FORK RIVER**
Chris Frissell | Salish Kootenai College

10:00 AM **BEAVERS AS A KEYSTONE SPECIES**
Torrey Ritter | Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

10:15 AM **15 MIN BREAK**

10:30 AM **PANEL DISCUSSION**

11:00 AM

15 MIN BREAK

11:15 AM

LIGHTNING TALKS

Moderated by Johanna Blake | U.S. Geological Survey

FROM DITCH TO LIVING STREAM: STORMWATER, THE AQUIFER, AND PATTEE CREEK
Olivia Hinds | Big Sky Watershed Corps, City of Missoula Stormwater Utility

APPLICATION OF SURROGATE TECHNOLOGY TO PREDICT NEAR-REAL-TIME METAL CONCENTRATIONS AND LOADS IN THE UPPER CLARK FORK AND SELECT TRIBUTARIES
Lindsey King | U.S. Geological Survey

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LIGHTNING TALKS - CONT'D

Estimating Uncertainty of Small-n Streamflow Rating Curves
Sam Carlson | Clark Fork Coalition

MYCOREMEDIATION OF METAL-CONTAMINATED WATER
Clifford Bradley | Montana BioAgriculture

WARMER, RAINIER, LOWER, GREENER: ALGAE IN THE CLARK FORK'S FUTURE
Ben Colman | University of Montana

11:45 AM

Q&A FOR ALL LIGHTNING TALKS

12:00-1:30 PM

LUNCH BREAK-ON YOUR OWN

Please enjoy lunch at a location of your choice.

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

SESSION 4: HUMAN DIMENSIONS IN THE CLARK FORK

Moderated by Sheree Watson | U.S. Geological Survey

1:30 PM **BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH LANDOWNER-AGENCY COLLABORATIONS**
John Lunzer | DNRC, Bruce Thomas | Thomas Herefords

1:45 PM **EXPLORING SOCIAL LEARNING IN THE UPPER CLARK FORK WORKING GROUP: INSIGHTS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CLARK FORK SCIENCE FORUM**
Madison Boone | Montana State University

2:00 PM **RECREATION AND PUBLIC USE ON THE CLARK FORK RIVER**
Ryan Schreiner | Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

2:15 PM **BREAK**

2:30 PM **PANEL DISCUSSION**

3:00 PM

WRAP-UP & CLOSING REMARKS

Closing remarks from our host.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2026 SPONSORS!