



Great Water Conversations

March 6, 2018

12 – 1:30p.m. (During Lunch)

Montana Water Summit

Radisson Colonial Hotel, Helena, MT

Are you looking to share your latest water-related project, initiative, or musing at the Montana Water Summit? This special topic lunch is the perfect opportunity to engage in specific conversation with other conference attendees. Maybe you'd like to ponder the finer points of groundwater dating or share your well-earned insights about water quality and beer...

We're looking for upward of 30 subject matter experts to host conversation tables at lunch on Tuesday, March 6. As a table host, you'll loosely guide an hour-long conversation based on your water-related expertise. Think of this as an atypical breakout session - over lunch!

Keep in mind that Summit attendees will choose a table from a variety of stellar topics and hosts, so be sure to make a creative sales pitch! *(Please note that hosting space is limited so we may not be able to accept all proposals).*

If you'd like to host a table, please submit an abstract here by **Feb. 21, 2018**:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FN87FBW> Table hosts will be notified by February 20 if their proposal has been accepted.

Description

The Great Water Conversations event will take place over lunch at round tables seating 6-8 people. The time period allows for about an hour of great conversation after hitting the buffet line.

The host will engage with conference attendees on a pre-determined, water-related conversation topic stemming from his or her expertise and interests.

Table host responsibilities

Engaging and knowledgeable table hosts are critical to the activity's success.

The table host's role is to present new information, posit interesting questions, and offer insight that aligns with his or her expertise in research, theory, or practice. The conversations should maintain a participatory, free-flowing rather than facilitated feel – think “dinner party with friends” vs. lecture.

Table hosts will be asked to:

- Submit a conversation title and short, snazzy abstract (examples below) pitching a proposed conversation topic.
- Arrive a few minutes early to sit at a pre-determined (and labeled) lunch table on Tuesday, March 6.
- Prepare a few discussion points, interesting facts, or other prompts to launch the conversation.
- Begin with introductions and loosely guide conversations around the topic.
- Have fun!

Conversation topics

Topics should relate to water in some way. Topics can range from technical to philosophical to light and fun. Table hosts might discuss their latest research or management initiatives or dive into key considerations for the perfect trout recipe.

Please reach out to Nikki Sandve, nsandve2@mt.gov, 406-556-4505 or Sara Meloy, 406-444-4247, smeloy@mt.gov for more information.

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Examples of abstracts from the Helena Education Foundation's annual Great Conversations event:

Kingfishers, Blue Mussels and Ferns: Smarter than the Average Human? Explore how 3.8 billion years of research and development by the critters that surround us is inspiring new materials, products, buildings and cities. Ask deeper questions about our roles as just one species on a planet with over 30 million species. Delve into what it means to be well-adapted and discover what secret strategies are lurking in your own backyard with **Dayna Baumeister**, who is recognized as one of the world's experts in the field of Biomimicry.

Growth and the "Grid" Power outages on the east coast, collapsing bridges in the Midwest, internet shortages worldwide. Is the world's aging infrastructure keeping pace with growth? How will failures in critical utilities affect our economy and the health of our communities? **Bob Rowe**, President and CEO of NorthWestern Corporation and former Chair of the Montana Public Service Commission, will lead a discussion about the challenges of building and maintaining infrastructure and the changing needs and expectations of Montanans.

What If Little Red Riding Hood Was Right?

Wolves themselves might be boring, but people are fascinating. Mix the two and it's a great recipe for mythology, political intrigue, heated public debate and ecological restoration and conflict. As the Gray Wolf Program Coordinator for Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks, **Carolyn Sime** works at the interface of science, natural resource policy and law, and a diverse public. She will share her expertise and welcome your thoughts on balancing our values and perceptions toward wilderness, wildness and wolves.