

# Ecological and Professional Networks

Emma Roginski, Restoration Ecology '23



One of the most engaging aspects of taking a WRFI course is having the opportunity to meet with our community partners, who are working in the field on projects that relate to our course themes. Interacting with the land and local players is a way to build both ecological and professional networks. This has recently been especially true for Pedro Marques, Executive Director of our partner Big Hole Watershed Committee, and Emma Roginski, a Restoration Ecology '23 alum who had a chance to build beaver dam analogs for BHWC while on course and is returning to the nonprofit this summer as their first Restoration Intern.

"We had so many networking opportunities while on the course, but I thought of Pedro to reach out to" says Emma. "He really had that energy of 'I want more people in this field'. I felt very inspired by him since [BHWC] has done so much for wildlife spaces in Montana. I loved the area and how beautiful it was and I really wanted to help."

For Pedro, the desire to bring on more college-aged individuals is twofold. First, BHWC is currently working on a variety of ecological projects that require energy and stamina to complete. He loves hosting groups of students who are motivated to make a difference. At the same time, he recognizes how bringing young people onto these field sites opens doors of possibilities for them. "Lots of times we see that [students] don't realize there are career opportunities in this field," he says. "It's important work and we want to make sure they know it's available."

As the summer and her internship quickly approaches, Emma is most looking forward to being back in the natural spaces of Montana, playing her part in improving the environment in whatever ways she can. Both she and Pedro look forward to welcoming this year's group of WRFI students and others so they too can learn more about the world of opportunities that lies within the field of conservation.



Emma is currently a sophomore at UC Davis who is majoring in Environmental Science and minoring in GIS. She'll be interning with BHWC this summer in Montana and plans to work in conservation upon graduation.